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ACE FREHLEY

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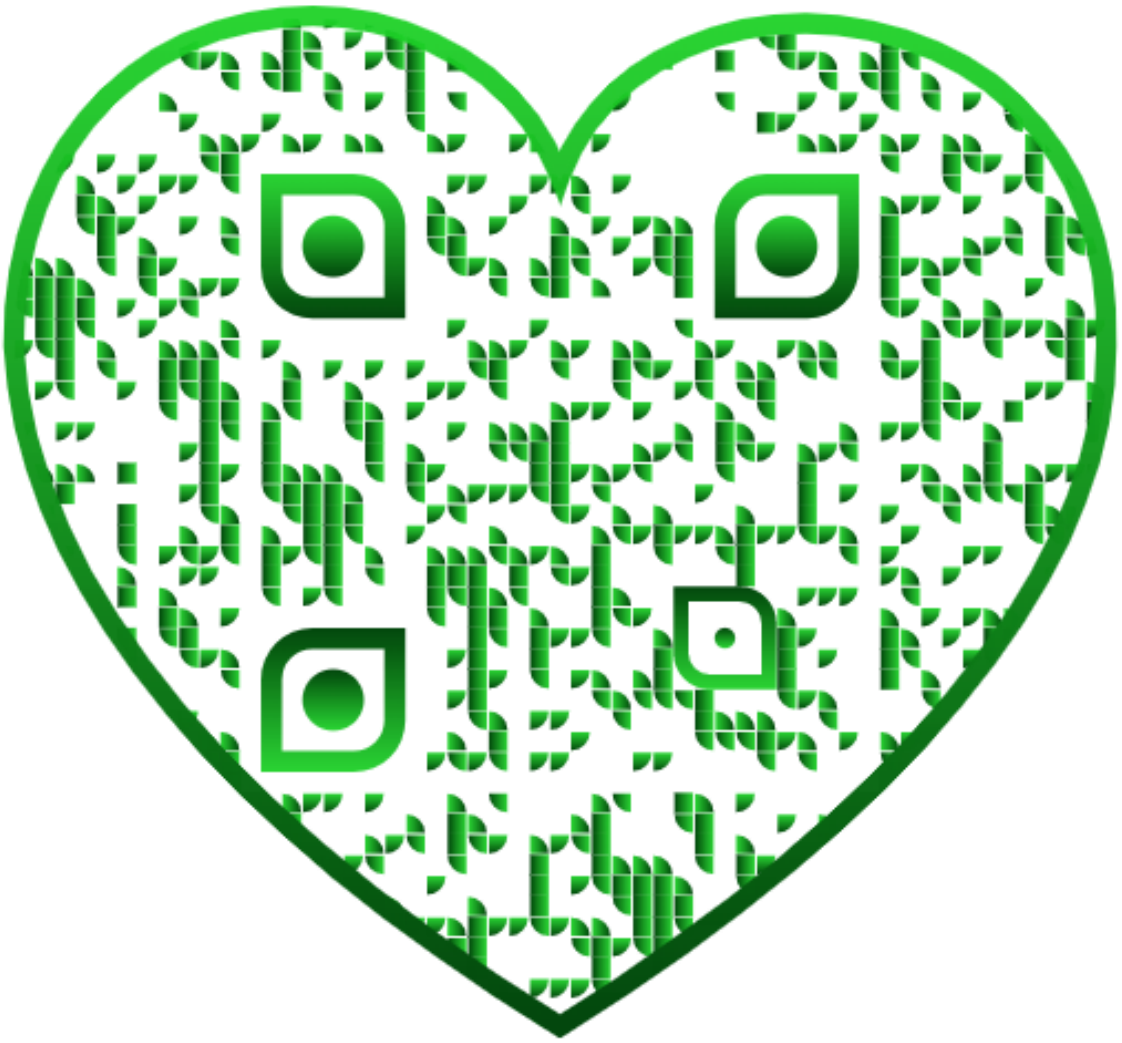

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> **Right from *Rocka Rolla* ... it just shows the breadth and the scope that this band has been through and still be able to call it metal.**
>
> — JUDAS PRIEST'S ROB HALFORD

Rob Halford belting out a tune while performing live with Judas Priest in early 1978.

PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES

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FIFTY YEARS OF JUDAS PRIEST'S INVINCIBILTY, FROM *ROCKA ROLLA* TO *INVINCIBLE SHIELD*

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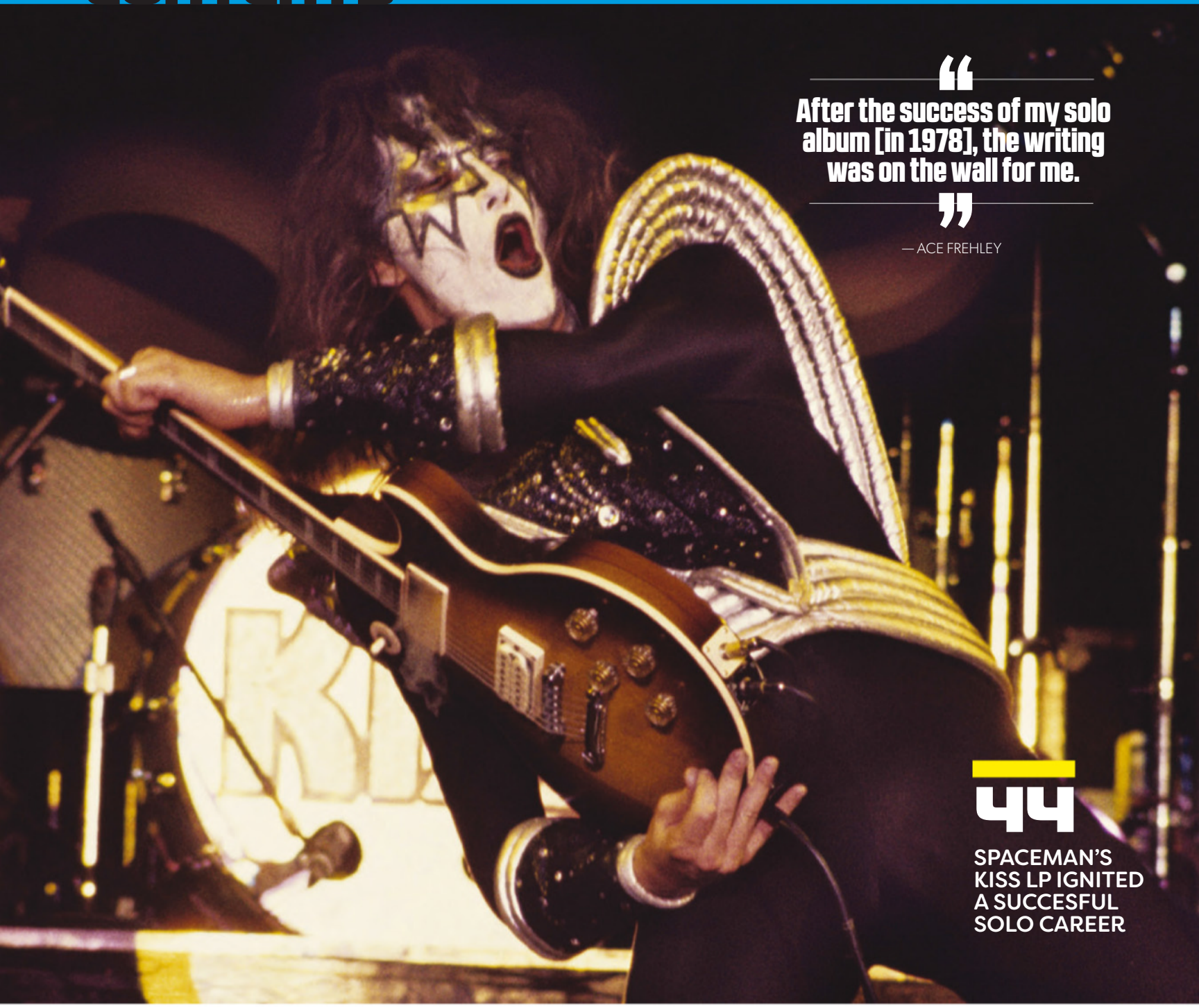

> After the success of my solo album [in 1978], the writing was on the wall for me.
>
> — ACE FREHLEY

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TOM HILL/WIREIMAGE

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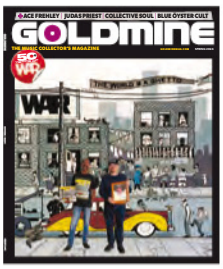
EDITOR'S NOTE

JUDAS PRIEST'S MUSIC of the 1970s sounds different from anything the band recorded after their acclaimed *British Steel* album. It has a nuanced level of progressiveness, powered by Rob Halford's dynamic vocals, that makes it like nothing else out there. In my opinion, Priest's '70s-era includes some of the best music ever recorded. Metal scribe Martin Popoff and I have spent hours talking about the merits of this under-appreciated era; so much that I challenged Martin to list and define all of Priest's songs recorded during the '70s, from worst to first. Not an easy task. And from there, Martin talked to Rob Halford and bassist Ian Hill about it. While shining the light on Priest's newest album, *Invincible Shield* (their best since 1979's *Hell Bent for Leather*?), it makes for a damn fine Priest tribute in this issue.

Besides our Priest coverage, we also give Ace Frehley deserved admiration. For many, Ace is the favorite among the Kiss stars. So, we decided to let Kiss biographer Ken Sharp pay tribute to Ace's solo career — focusing on his classic 1978 album up to the newly released *10,000 Volts*. Not only did we get Ace's input, but producers Eddie Kramer and Steve Brown (Trixter fame), drummer Anton Fig and Kiss designer Dennis Woloch contributed into what ended up being a wonderful Spaceman extravaganza for Ace and Kiss fans alike!

The Spring 2024 issue has two other covers for our readers to collect and enjoy: WAR and Collective Soul (shown at right). We also have *fan*tastic collector's editions for Judas Priest and Ace Frehley, bundled with limited-edition colored vinyl. Only a few hundred of these bundles will be available, so go to *Shop.GoldmineMag.com* and get yours ASAP!

— **Patrick Prince**, *Editor*



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GOLDMINE

Issue 948, Vol. 50, No. 1

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SPIN CYCLE

GET YOUR STONES OUT!

BY DAVE THOMPSON

There was a time when new **Rolling Stones** live albums were one of the rock calendar's most significant events. *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out!, Love You Live, Still Life, Flashpoint* — these were serious offerings, random gifts from the self-styled (and accurately so) Greatest Rock and Roll Band in the World. In a world in which lesser-quality bootlegs were the only other choice, each has ascended to some pantheon of magnificence. Yes, even *Flashpoint*, which Spin Cycle still spins on a regular basis.

Now, of course, there are more Stones live albums than there are weeks in a year (slight exaggeration, but not by too much), and here comes yet another one. Another three slabs of wax, another 21st-century concert, another dive into the 2002-03 Licks tour. But, in terms of legendary performances, *Live at The Wiltern* (Mercury/Universal) takes some whipping as the band delved not into the deepest recesses of the catalog, but at least into a handful of songs that didn't turn up too often in the set list.

Out of 100-plus shows, "Neighbors" received just 15 airings, "Live With Me" a couple of dozen, "Going to a Go-Go" made it into 10 sets, "Hand of Fate" just nine, "Dance" no more than seven. Solomon Burke, who opened the show, reappears for "Everybody Needs Somebody to Love." Yes, you can play statistic forever.

What's crucial, however, and what makes this album stand out is just how easily they meld together, as though they were playing the same show every night — at the same time as the very freshness of the repertoire brings a whole new dimension of excitement to the performance.

Has there ever been a better live version of "Hand of Fate"? A more impassioned "No Expectations," a scratchier "Stray Cat Blues"? Maybe the band was enjoying the absence of so many of their customary warhorses as much as the audience sounds like it was.

Excise "Jumpin' Jack Flash" from the start of the show, and the sheer inevitability of "Honky Tonk Women," "Start Me Up," "Brown Sugar" and "Tumbling Dice" at the end, and you could almost imagine them closing the show with "Ventilator Blues," then encoring with "Summer Romance."

As is customary with these vault releases, the packaging isn't too much to write home about, an all-black-and-gold gatefold with two discs slipped into

Live at The Wiltern releases (left); Mick Jagger and Keith Richards performing at The Wiltern Theatre on November 4, 2002.

GARY FRIEDMAN/LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES

a single pocket, and liners, credits and color photos on the inner sleeves. And still *Live at The Wiltern* stands among the most enjoyable of all the Stones' archive live releases — at least once you pass the 1982 U.K. outing.

Just one complaint. When did Mick forget how to pronounce the word "burden"? He sounds like he's singing "button."

Any **Rick Derringer** fans out there? Of course there are. Deep down, we are all Rick Derringer fans and, if you don't believe that, give "Hang on Sloopy" a spin. And, if you don't have a copy handy, there's 12 purple inches of *Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo — The Best of Relaunched* (Cleopatra Records) just calling out for you to buy it.

Like the title says, this is the Hooch relaunched, not reissued — no stale old originals that you've heard a quadrillion times before, but a seething hot and daisy fresh dance through our man's greatest hits. "Sloopy" is here, of course, and the title track, "Fever," "I Got to Go Back (And Watch That Little Girl Dance)," "Teenage Love Affair" — and there you've got a couple of the finest (and, in the latter case, unapologetically horny, not to mention illicit) floor fillers around.

Even more excitingly, the performances scarcely deviate from the originals, at the same time as they stand imbued with a whole new sense of excitement and freshness. That's a rare thing among artists revisiting their most timeworn classics, and one wonders whether the presence among the sidemen of Todd Plant, a familiar name on the Florida tribute scene, perhaps reminded Derringer (whose production here is spot-on) precisely what was needed. You would never compare *Relaunched* to hearing the songs for the very first time. But you will certainly hear them anew.

Assuming, of course, that you don't already own them. Originally released in the early 2000s, the music here has made sporadic CD appearances since then. This, however, is its vinyl debut, and it's been worth the wait.

Mark Knopfler's return for his first new album since 2018's *Down the Road Wherever* comes hot on the heels of two of the most admired vinyl box sets of recent years, the career-spanning *The Studio Albums* packages. But they also serve as a potent reminder of just what a hard act his back catalog is to follow. Arguably, *Kill to Get Crimson* and *Privateering* hit peaks that even Dire Straits merely aspired toward, while more recent sets have proven that whatever else is going on in the world, Knopfler is one of music's few constants.

The good news is *One Deep River* (Blue Note) does not alter that vision. Still (of course) pursuing that so melodic breed of Anglo-Americana that has long been his forte, with a voice that feels like curling up in a warm rug with a mug of only slightly spiked cocoa, Knopfler long ago struck that magic balance between soft melancholy and gentle humor. Like he sings early into side one, he's "Ahead of the Game."

The country-esque "Watch Me Gone," too, haunts even as it exhilarates, with (occasional) backing vocals that cannot help but remind you of his peerless collaboration with Emmylou Harris, at the same time as setting out its own unique stall. And there's just one word of warning to share. Though the 12 song, 2-LP package looks both generous and, for lovers of Knopfler's extended passages, promising, too — the discs revolve at 45rpm. So, unless you habitually do calisthenics while playing your latest purchases, you'd better get ready for some rapid up-and-downing.

Non-Stop Erotic Cabaret ... and Other Stories: Live (Live Here Now) is the latest offering from **Soft Cell** — the '80s duo that, at the time, felt like every admirers' favorite dark secret (go ahead, name any song by them that wasn't "Tainted Love"), but now seems akin to a factory, simply churning out the releases. A box set here, a new album there, a remix set somewhere else, and an RSD offering just around the corner — itself derived from the super-deluxe edition of Soft Cell's debut album, which now spreads out here as well.

Four LPs long, which seems incredible when you consider that even Yes fit their live show onto three, this 2021 live in London recording catches the duo replaying that album in its entirety, but bracketed on either side by further material both ancient and modern.

They make a good job of it, too. While the U.K. hit "Torch" is a natural opener, the first half of the show is turned over to some surprising selections from the catalog — among them "Kitchen Sink Drama," "Where the Heart Is," "L'esqualita" and "Martin," while the encores basically serve as one-stop bookends to the band's entire career (debut single "Memorabilia" and most recent 45 "Purple Zone").

Musically, you could argue that there are few surprises: Soft Cell are not an

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 14]

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Records, records and only records! No store swag, no books or posters, but if you are looking for only records, then this is the store for you. The prices are very good, and I have always found the used records that I was looking for. They carry some new records, but their bread and butter are used records.

STAFF 10

Shannon and Jacob became the owners of this store in January 2024. The original owner, who named the store after a Captain Beefheart song, decided to retire to even warmer temperatures. The times that I have been to the store, the employee behind the counter is always willing to talk records and make suggestions (I think it was Shannon both times).

STORE 9

My only knock on this store is that I wish it were bigger. The store is clean and easy to search for what you are looking for. Outside the store you will find a great selection of $1 albums, and when you first walk in, you will find all the new acquisitions, which is my favorite part of the dig.

SELECTION 9

While they may not stock multiple copies of records, they have every genre of music you could want. They have an amazing selection of jazz that would make any collector salivate. They always seem to have a decent selection of '70s and '80s metal, and some good OG punk.

SPECIAL MENTION

This store does not participate in Record Store Day. This is one of the only stores in the area that stays open after 6 p.m. I will visit this store time and time again and find something every time.

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10 ALBUMS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

ADAM ANT

Inspired by the Sex Pistols, London native Stuart Goddard became Adam Ant and formed Adam & The Ants in 1977. The band released their debut album, *Dirk Wears White Sox*, in 1979. The band's songs "Stand and Deliver" and "Prince Charming" went to the top of the U.K. singles chart, while "Antmusic" reached No. 2 on the chart. Ant went solo in 1982 with the *Friend or Foe* album, which included the hit single "Goody Two Shoes," the song that helped to give him mainstream success in America.

At one point, Ant had eight simultaneous singles in the U.K. Top 40. Success in the music business led to acting roles for Ant in TV shows that included *The Equalizer, Amazing Stories, Tales from the Crypt* and *Northern Exposure*.

In March, Ant embarked on the Antmusic 2024 tour, which was comprised of 36 dates across the United States. On the tour, Ant performed songs from throughout his long career.

— John Curley

FRED KUHLMAN

Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers, Jonathan Richman and the Modern Lovers
The simple genius of Jonathan Richman caught my imagination from the first listen. Its humorous edge and the sublime anthem "Road Runner" were a breath of fresh air.

Lou Reed, Transformer
Probably the most commonly listened to album by the pre-punk scene in London. With Lou Reed's marvelous stories of New York's underground characters and life and includes the iconic "Walk on the Wild Side."

Roxy Music, Roxy Music
I bought this album while at art school. The kitsch cover shot caught my eye and didn't prepare me for the futuristic songs of Bryan Ferry and his fantastic-looking band.

Iggy Pop, The Idiot
I was a big fan of Iggy and the Stooges, but these slow-grinding, haunting songs became my favorite album during the London punk days.

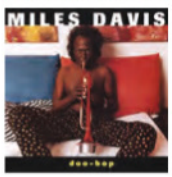
New York Dolls, New York Dolls
I saw the New York Dolls live, supporting Rod Stewart at Wembley, and immediately after bought this album. A brilliant mix of thunderous rock and roll, a provocative look and great lyrics.

Kraftwerk, Trans-Europe Express
This album came out in 1977 and for me was the opposite spectrum to punk. I fell in love with Kraftwerk's synthesized world and would listen to it late at night.

Al Green, Greatest Hits
I love Al Green and for me, he is the greatest voice in soul music. Anyone wishing to become a singer should listen carefully to him. I'd take a cassette compilation with me on tour, and one of the highlights of my career was meeting him. Listening to his great, soulful voice on classic tracks like "Tired of Being Alone" and "Let's Stay Together" always makes me feel good.

Frank Sinatra, Songs for Swingin' Lovers!
My parents used to play this album as I grew up, and I became a fan of "The Voice." I saw him at The Greek in Los Angeles, and it was the best concert I've ever seen, especially when he sang "Summer Wind."

Brian Eno, Taking Tiger Mountain (By Strategy)
After leaving Roxy Music, Brian Eno went on to stretch the parameters of electronic music. His early humorous lyrics progressed into simplistic melodies that always relax me when I listen to them.



Miles Davis, Doo-Bop
I saw Miles Davis live in London, and he blew me away. This last album, a mix of hip-hop and jazz, features some of his greatest energetic solos, showing how he was always ahead of the game.

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[FROM PAGE 9]

act you're going to catch boogieing the night away. But the performance is tight, dramatic, engrossing regardless — and while vocalist Marc Almond is scarcely hitting (or missing) the same kind of notes that he once ate for breakfast, he remains the consummate showman, even if you can only hear him.

Finally, the 30th anniversary of **Alice In Chains'** *Jar of Flies* EP (Sony Legacy) is here, and with it a remastered seven-track disc that reminds us (in case our memory requires a jog) just how huge, and how influential the Seattle band was.

It is not a straightforward replica of the original. That, spread across two separate discs, also included a second EP's worth of songs, reissuing the earlier *Sap*. That reappeared for Record Store Day in 2020, as a one-sided 12-inch (the original format for the 1994 twofer, too). This time around, *Jar of Flies* buzzes across both sides of the disc, and the sound quality definitely goes up a notch as a result.

As for the music, perhaps the most informative aspect of this reissue is to see how rapidly Alice's sound transcended the grunge scene with which they were most popularly associated and revealed them instead to inhabit a heartland poised directly between hard rock and Americana. The late Layne Staley's voice in particular hits peaks that will send shivers down the spine, and for anybody who remembers the era with fondness, *Jar of Flies* is a compulsory purchase. If only to replace your scratchy original.

ALBUM PROFILE

BILLY MORRISON'S 'PROJECT'

BY PATRICK PRINCE

Guitarist **Billy Morrison** has one helluva resume. He's performed and/or recorded with quite an array of rock and roll luminaries. He has played guitar alongside Steve Stevens in Billy Idol's band. He has toured with The Cult as their bassist. He is in numerous side projects with Jane's Addiction's Dave Navarro. He is the ultimate collaborator, too. But his latest endeavor, the solo album *The Morrison Project* (The Label Group), has choice musical collaborations with the likes of Linda Perry of 4 Non Blondes fame, Slipknot vocalist Corey Taylor, guitar maestro Steve Vai, Idol and crew and longtime best friend Ozzy Osbourne. The Osbourne track in particular is the most potent — a love-gone-bad, all-out rocker called "Crack Cocaine." *Goldmine* recently spoke to Morrison about the experience of recording this new solo album.

GOLDMINE: *Listening to the new album,* The Morrison Project *— you are a riff master. Take a song like "It's Come to This." What a great riff and nice sound. If you had to choose a guitarist who influenced you as a riff master, who would it be?*

BILLY MORRISON: There is only one answer, and that's Steve Jones of the Sex Pistols. And here's my reason why: Can you name me one other band that in 19 months and 12 songs — because that's all it was — changed the course of rock history? I'll take you for a steak dinner because there isn't one.

Every other band, like the Stones, The Beatles, The Who — all of them — they had a trajectory. They had multiple records to hone their craft. The Sex Pistols were 19 months in existence. And that record [*Never Mind the Bollocks*] still stands the test of time today. Those are the greatest rock and roll riffs ever.

GM: *On the song "Crack Cocaine," Ozzy sounds great. How did you hook up with Ozzy for that? How did that go down?*

BM: Well, Ozzy's my best friend for 30 years. So you know we're friends in the most truthful terminology of that word, meaning we don't sit around talking about music a lot. We talk about what friends talk about, which is chocolate and the weather and where we're going for dinner. But we're both musicians, so over the years we have, on occasion, created music. And the interesting thing about Ozzy right now [is that] everyone's talking about his health, and is he going to do this and is he going to do that. Well, "Crack Cocaine" proves he still has an amazing voice. He's still the Prince of Darkness. And I just wish everyone could have seen him in that [studio] room when the record light went on, and me and Steve Stevens sat there and watched him sing that song in about 12 minutes.

There are reasons for that as well. There's a chemistry. With Ozzy ... we've just been around each other a lot, so there was zero ego. He knows Steve very well, too, because obviously I'm in a band with Steve. There wasn't anyone trying to show that they were better than anyone else. It was about serving the song. And I believe we were granted one of those moments in time where a really amazing song is given to you by the universe.

GM: *Let's talk about Linda Perry's involvement on the track "Chasing Shadows."*

BM: The thing with that track I'm most proud of is that first of all, Linda doesn't do this kind of thing. If you look around, Linda does not pop up on random people's albums very often. She's too busy winning Grammys for songwriting with some of the greatest songs the world has ever had. However, I sent Linda the song at first — she's a very close friend of mine — and I said, "Would you consider singing a song?" And she said, "Well,

send me the track." I wrote the whole thing. I wrote it on piano. I wrote the lyrics. I wrote the melody like it was a self-contained song. So there is a version of that song with me singing it, which the world will never hear because it's sh*t. But I needed to communicate to Linda how this song went. And I expected her to say, "OK, come to my studio. We've got to deconstruct it. I want to rewrite the lyrics. It's got potential here." And the text that I got back from her was, "This is a perfect song. I don't want to change a thing. I will sing this for you." So as a songwriter, to have one of the world's greatest songwriters tell you you've written a perfect song and doesn't want to change the words, that's pretty special.

GM: *And then there's the song "Mr. Dream." Even though you've played with Billy Idol and Steve Stevens all these years, you know, asking them to do something ... were they pretty cool about that?*
BM: Funny enough, that's another track

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 96]

BILLY MORRISON
THE MORRISON PROJECT

Featuring an electrifying 12 songs including guest performances by Ozzy Osbourne, Billy Idol, DMC, Al Jourgensen, Steve Vai, Steve Stevens, Linda Perry, Tommy Clufetos, John5, and more!

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MORE THAN 65 YEARS AFTER BECOMING A STAR, **DION** CONTINUES TO EXPAND HIS DEEP DISCOGRAPHY.

BY CHRIS M. JUNIOR

ALLISON ORENSTEIN

STILL A FORCE

Growing up, Dion DiMucci says he never asked for favors. As an adult, the Rock and Roll Hall of Famer has discovered that it actually doesn't hurt to ask fellow musicians for some help.

The proof can be found on Dion's recent albums. Jeff Beck, Van Morrison, Brian Setzer and Paul Simon were among those who answered his call to guest on *Blues With Friends* (2020). Boz Scaggs, Eric Clapton, Billy Gibbons, Bruce Springsteen and others did the same for *Stomping Ground* (2021).

Dion has kept the trend rolling with *Girl Friends*, released in March on Keeping the Blues Alive Records. All 12 songs feature female artists on vocals and/or an instrument, and the notables this time around include Susan Tedeschi ("Soul Force"), Carlene Carter ("An American Hero") and Shemekia Copeland ("Mama Said").

"It's a lot of fun working with these artists," Dion says. "I made a lot of friends doing this, like Peter Frampton and Mark Knopfler. It makes your life enjoyable."

Dion has enjoyed a music career that few can match in terms of length and catalog diversity. As a teen fronting The Belmonts, he scored his first *Billboard* chart entry, "I Wonder Why," in 1958. More doo-wop hits with his Bronx, New York–bred vocal group followed before he launched a solo career. As a swaggering rock singer-songwriter, Dion was a steady presence in the upper reaches of the *Billboard* Hot 100 into the mid-1960s, most notably with "Runaround Sue," "The Wanderer" and "Donna the Prima Donna."

For his version of "Abraham, Martin and John," which peaked at No. 4 on the Hot 100 in 1968, Dion opted for a more sensitive, folk-rock style. And in the decades since, he's also taken deep dives into gospel, blues and country, picking up Grammy Award nominations — and those famous friends — along the way.

Dion is as soulful in conversation as he is in his music, and he recently had plenty to say about the making of *Girl Friends* — and other topics, too. There was relief in his voice as he shared what it took to finally come to terms with the plane-crash deaths of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper, his tour mates on 1959's Winter Dance Party. And he was elated when asked to comment on what's next for his biomusical, *The Wanderer*.

GOLDMINE: *As you and Mike Aquilina were writing songs for* Girl Friends, *were you also talking about who might fit best as female guests? Or did the material come first, then you proceeded to seek out suitable singers and musicians?*

DION: I think the material came first. Instead of doing it like a Tony Bennett album, where you just get a bunch of old songs and everybody sings verses, no matter what, I thought it would be good to write a song where you have a conversation across the table with a girl — different scenarios. So I started doing that. Then I said, "This is gonna get boring if all the songs are like this." So we just [focused on] writing good songs.

I listen to a lot of music, so I could hear somebody [else as a possible fit] on the tracks. But there were a lot of

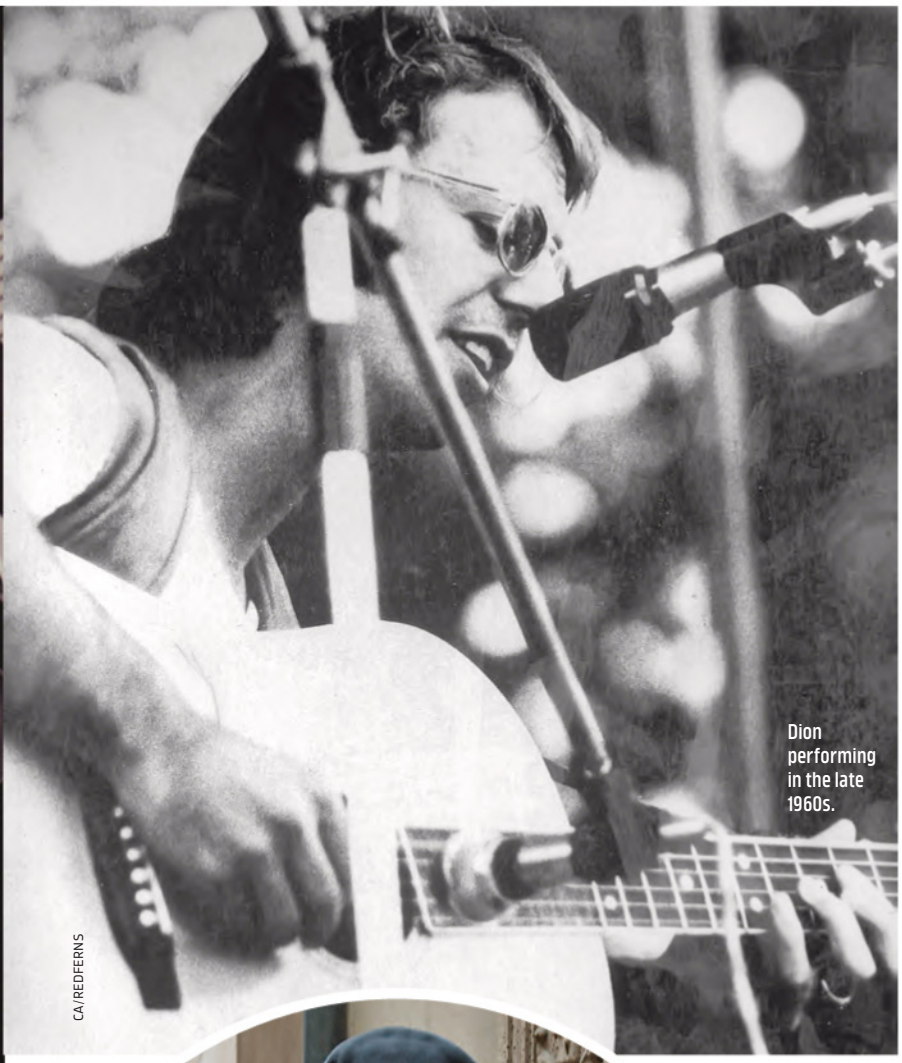
DION THROUGH THE DECADES

DICK MORSEMAN/NEWSDAY RM VIA GETTY IMAGES

Dion DiMucci sings for the crowd at Freedomland in the Bronx, New York, on July 30, 1963.

GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS

Dion and The Belmonts (L-R): Carlo Mastrangelo, Dion DiMucci and Fred Milano, circa 1960, while group member Angelo D'Aleo served in the military.



Dion performing in the late 1960s.

CA/REDFERNS

Dion onstage at the Park West Theater, Chicago, Illinois, June 30, 1978.

PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES

Dion DiMucci today.

Dion performing at The Lehman Center September 28, 2004, in Bronx, New York.

BILL TOMPKINS/GETTY IMAGES

surprises, like Maggie Rose. I was talking to Chrissie Hynde about doing ["I Got Wise"], and she was so busy. She wanted to do it, absolutely, but then I was on the Joe Bonamassa blues cruise, and I heard Maggie Rose singing in the atrium. I said, "Who's that?" I didn't even know who she was. And when I heard her, I said, "I have to get her on one of these songs." She has such a distinctive, engaging voice.

The song is the main purpose; the song is the primary goal. It's not who's on it. If the song works, everybody looks good, you know. Everything works if the song works.

GM: *I would imagine that an email, text or voicemail about recording a song with Dion would prompt a quick reply from the recipients. Were you the one doing all the reaching out to gauge their interest and availability?*
DION: I did [do that]. Some of the girls I walked right up to, like Joanne Shaw Taylor. She was on the blues cruise, and she rocks. I had this rocker ["Just Like That"], and I heard her on it immediately. Joe Bonamassa told her that I wanted to talk to her, and she sought me out and came up and said, "Yeah, I'd be happy to do that."

It's amazing what happens with these artists who contribute to the songs I write. Sometimes I feel like they do a better job on my song than they do on their own album. I don't know why that is. To give an example, on the last album, *Stomping Ground*, I asked Eric Clapton to do something on a song called "If You Wanna Rock 'n' Roll." And he did. I sent [the track] in an email because the country was locked down. He played on it, and he sends it back to me. I called him, and I said, "Eric, you sound 19 years old on this. You just blew me away." He said, "Well, Dion, I stood up in the studio. I wanted to do a good job."

GM: *You mentioned emailing a song to Clapton for him to play on. You sing about being "old school" and playfully reference social media and modern technology in "Sugar Daddy." Was recording* Girl Friends *a mix of classic and contemporary choices? Talk about some of the equipment and recording techniques that you and co-producer Wayne Hood used to make this album.*
DION: Well, I don't know too much about equipment, and I don't know what some of the girls used. I think Wayne uses Pro Tools. But I go in and I record — I could record all 12 songs in one day, just sit down and do them with my guitar. I ask him for a click track; just give me a beat. I'm a rhythm singer: All you have to do is give me a beat, and I'm on it. I'm a rhythm singer; I make a drum machine sound great.

I'll say, "Give it to me about 118 [beats per minute]," and we figure it out. And I sing all of the songs. And then we'll have guys come in, maybe a drummer or a bass player, or Wayne will do some stuff on keyboards. I love the Rhodes keyboard, more than piano. I feel like I seep into the Rhodes piano more than a plain piano. ... I get a good track, a very solid track with a drummer. I make sure it isn't wavering, and I don't like a lot of drum fills getting in the way of anybody's expression. ... These artists, when they come in, they improvise on this. They couldn't do the same thing twice.

GM: *Were any of these artists in the studio with you at the same time, face to face, doing their parts?*
DION: Yeah, it's a mixture. We had Valerie Tyson in the studio, and Randi Fishenfeld. Sue Foley and I, we sang "Hey Suzy" like The Everly Brothers, the whole song. And then she said to me, "You know, it doesn't work. You got to pull me out here and there." She told me where to pull her out, and she said, "It's sounds a little more special when I come in on these parts."

You get these surprises. Christine Ohlman, when she did "Sugar Daddy" — who knew? They come up with these ideas. She's pulling on so much intuition. ... She sang with the *Saturday Night Live* band for years; she's steeped in rhythm and blues. ... You can never tell somebody to do what she did. It's like that, and that's the fun of doing an album like this. I got into it three albums ago; I never did anything like this. It's been so joy-filled for me because these artists surprise you.

GM: *The notable names you've worked with on your three albums this decade could fill up a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame exhibit. There's a still-active contemporary of yours who would be an intriguing duet partner down the road: Ronald Isley.*
DION: Oh, my God. You mention him, and it takes me back to the Apollo [Theater] when I was a kid. We played the Apollo with The Isley Brothers; they'd have to rebuild the stage when they left. These guys, I wouldn't miss them, any show. It was off-the-charts exciting. As a kid, 19 years old, I was just enthralled with these guys. It was something to watch.

GM: *The inclusion of "Hey Suzy," co-written by Scott Kempner, on* Girl Friends *is especially notable in the wake of his death last November. The thorough versions of his obituary mentioned your various collaborations with him through the years, including the short-lived 1990s band Little Kings, also with Mike Mesaros from The Smithereens and Scott's Del-Lords bandmate Frank Funaro. How did the four of you come together, and why didn't the group last longer than it did?*
DION: That's a good question. I don't know how that worked; I can't plan these things if I tried. [Someone] gave me a cassette of Scott Kempner's; it was in my trunk for about five years. It was just among cassettes. And one day I picked it up and I stuck it in the cassette player in the car, and I heard "You Move Me" [the first song on Kempner's 1992 solo album, *Tenement Angels*]. And I said, "Man, this guy is good. I love this song."

So I got in touch with him. I rented an apartment in New York, and he came up and we sat around and [wrote out a set list] — 16 songs that we wanted to do. He knew Frank and Mike, and we just went out and played, like a punk-rock band. I just wanted to play with them for a winter or whatever it was. I wanted to do something different. We got booked in a few clubs upstate and in Jersey, and the last club was the Mercury Lounge on Houston Street [in Manhattan]. And we went in, and this guy came in with a tape recorder — that's the album [*Live in New York*]. If this guy didn't come in and sit in the middle of the floor with his tape machine, that would have been gone. ... We captured all the songs, and there's some good stuff on there.

I miss Scott. He was such an inventive arranger and great with words. He was a very bright guy. I don't even think he knew how good he was.

GM: *For many music fans, February 3 prompts thoughts of Buddy Holly, Ritchie*

Valens and the Big Bopper, and radio stations pay tribute to your late tour mates on that date by playing their music. How do you typically make your way through February 3 every year?

DION: Well, that's an interesting question because, you know, I never really knew how to place that. They didn't have grief counseling in the Bronx when I was 19. ... And nobody in my neighborhood — my aunts, my uncles, my mother — nobody asked me to explain it. They just didn't talk about it. It was like, "You want a sandwich?" You know, they fed ya. We didn't talk about it, and you didn't go to the newspapers, God forbid, and talk about it. We didn't use it as exhibit A, like talk about [it] to be an opportunist. We grieved privately, and that was that. I never knew how to place it.

On the 50-year anniversary [of the plane crash] in 2009, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame called me. And they said, "We went out to Clear Lake, Iowa, and we were at a conference, and nothing makes sense. Would you tell us your story?" I said, "Wow, nobody ever asked me that." ... They came down [to Florida] with a camera, a very simple shoot, and I told them the story from A to Z. I had time; nobody ever asked, so I told them the whole story.

When I finished, I went out with [a friend] and Terry Stewart, who was the president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame at the time. We went out to have lunch, and I just started crying. It was like I let go of 50 years ... I just broke. It all came out. It was in a box somewhere in my head, hidden away. It just cleared out my head, and I felt like I could breathe better. I was glad they asked.

I miss those guys on a lot of levels. They were great writers and friends and artists. You're on tour for like two weeks in a bus, you become like brothers, you know? ... It was a great experience that means a lot to me, and I still miss them. And I think the real deal is I really wanna make them proud because in my faith, relationships never end. I feel like I'm going to see them someday.

GM: *This year marks the 35th anniversary of* Yo Frankie. *What prompted your full-fledged return to rock and roll at that point in your career?*

DION: You know, I was singing gospel music for about five years. I wrote these gospel songs; they were very uplifting to me, and I just got into it. WCBS-FM [in New York] had called me and said, "Would you do a show at Radio City Music Hall, two nights, of your hits?" And I said yes. ... It sold out in like a minute.

I [assembled a backing band], and we did the two nights. And Clive Davis and a bunch of guys were in the audience from Arista, and they asked me to come over and said, "What would you think of making an album for us?" I said, "I'd love to." They said, "How about Dave Edmunds [as producer]?" I knew [about] Rockpile and Dave Edmunds.

That was a lot of fun, [working with] Chuck Leavell on piano, [who's] the Stones' piano player, Terry Williams on drums from Dire Straits ... We just rocked out.

GM: *What's the status of* The Wanderer *coming to Broadway?*

DION: Oh, I'm glad you asked. It's gonna premiere this year, in the fall. ... We have a theater; we're negotiating that right now — I can't mention the name of it right now. But man, it's a play that cannot be denied. ... When I was a kid, I heard Jimmy Reed, I heard Hank Williams. I always wanted to transmit the feeling that they gave me as a kid. They took me to another place, and I've always been trying to create that and transmit it to others, whether it's a song or a play or a book or whatever I'm doing. So the play, it takes you on a trip. It has the history of early rock and roll ... then there's betrayal and overcoming and great music, the way it's placed in the show. And there's a lot of laughs also.

GM: *You're going to be 85 years old in July. How do you plan on celebrating?*

DION: (Laughs) Let me see. I'm just gonna sit down with good friends and have a good meal and hopefully I'll be breathing, you know? ... I feel very blessed. I'm in good shape. I haven't drank or drugged in 55 years, which is part of the [play], too: recovery. I was addicted to heroin as a kid. I was hanging out with Frankie Lymon, and he died in February 1968, and it shook me up. I met a guy who took me to a 12-step, spiritual-based program, and I never looked back. So, I think that's why I'm healthy, I'm strong. If I'm healthy, that's good enough for me — I'll celebrate.

"The song is the main purpose; the song is the primary goal. It's not who's on it. If the song works, everybody looks good, you know. Everything works if the song works."

— DION

DION SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

45s

ABC

- 599 Together Again [Mono Record], 1967, $30.00
- 599 Together Again [Stereo Record], 1967, $60.00
- 10896 For Bobbie/Movin' Man, 1967, $20.00

ARISTA

- 9797 And the Night Stood Still/Tower of Love, 1989, $5.00
- 9797 And the Night Stood Still/Tower of Love [Picture Sleeve], 1989, $5.00
- A2L 8206 24 Original Classics, 1984, $20.00

COLUMBIA

- 42662 Ruby Baby/He'll Only Hurt You [Picture Sleeve], 1962 $60.00
- 42662 Ruby Baby/He'll Only Hurt You, 1962, $30.00
- 42776 This Little Girl/The Loneliest Man in the World, 1963, $20.00
- 42810 Be Careful of Stones That You Throw (same on both sides), [Disc Jockey], 1963, $125.00
- 42810 Be Careful of Stones That You Throw/I Can't Believe (That You Don't Love Me Anymore), 1963, $20.00
- 42852 Donna the Prima Donna (same on both sides), [Disc Jockey], 1963, $100.00 — Promo only on red vinyl
- 42852 Donna the Prima Donna/You're Mine, 1963, $30.00
- 42977 I'm the Hoochie Coochie Man/The Road I'm On, 1964 $20.00
- 42977 I'm the Hoochie Coochie Man/The Road I'm On [Picture Sleeve], 1964, $60.00
- 43096 Johnny B. Goode/Chicago Blues, 1964, $20.00
- 43213 Sweet Sweet Baby/Unloved, Unwanted Me, 1965, $20.00
- 43293 Spoonful/Kickin' Child, 1965, $20.00
- 43423 Tomorrow Won't Bring the Rain/You Move Me Babe, 1965, $20.00
- 43423 Tomorrow Won't Bring the Rain/You Move Me Babe [Picture Sleeve], 1965, $200.00
- 43483 Time in My Heart for You/Wake Up Baby, 1965, $20.00
- 43692 So Much Younger/Two-Ton Feather, 1966, $20.00

DAYSPRING

- 7-01- 412901 Seasons, 1984, $20.00

EPIC

- 34- 73665 (If There Was) Any Other Way / Where Does My Heart Beat Now, 1991, $5.00
- 34- 73856 The Last to Know/Unison, 1991, $5.00
- 34- 74090 Beauty and the Beast/The Beast Lets Belle Go, 1991, $5.00
- 34- 74277 If You Asked Me To/Where Does My Heart Beat Now, 1992, $5.00
- 34- 74336 Nothing Broken But My Heart/Unison, 1992, $5.00
- 34- 74337 Love Can Move Mountains/Cry Just a Little, 1992, $5.00
- 34- 77021 When I Fall in Love/If I Were You, 1993, $5.00
- 34- 77230 The Power of Love/No Living Without Loving You, 1993, $5.00
- 36- 77344 Misled/Real Emotion, 1994, $5.00
- 36- 77545 Think Twice/L'amour Existe Encore, 1994, $5.00
- 46- 77451 Misled (5 versions), 1994, $20.00
- EAS 4740 Love Can Move Mountains (Club Mix 5:30) (Underground Vocal Mix 7:10) (Underground Instrumental 4:38) (Club Dub 5:30) (Underground Dub 5:35) (Wake & Jones Dub 5:41) [Disc Jockey], 1992, $20.00

EPIC/550 MUSIC

- 36- 78237 Because You Loved Me/I Don't Know, 1996, $5.00
- 36- 78345 It's All Coming Back to Me Now/The Power of the Dream, 1996, $5.00
- 36- 78529 All By Myself/Because You Loved Me (Live), 1997, $5.00
- 36- 79309 That's the Way It Is (same on both sides), $200.00
- 46- 78377 It's All Coming Back to Me Now (4 versions), 1996, $10.00
- 46-78737 Tell Him (same on both sides), 1997, $60.00
- 46- 79473 That's the Way It Is (unknown versions), $200.00
- B2S 41125 My Heart Will Go On (7 versions), [Disc Jockey], 1998, $60.00
- BAS 8194 It's All Coming Back to Me Now (Classic Paradise Mix) (Anthem Mix) (Amnesia Mix), [Disc Jockey], 1996, $12.00
- BAS 8716 It's All Coming Back to Me Now (Moran Breakdown Dub) (Prophet Mix) (Aphrodisiac Dub) (Moran Virtuous Dub), [Disc Jockey], 1996, $30.00
- BAS 41402 To Love You More (2 versions), [Disc Jockey], 1998, $20.00

LAURIE

- 302 Where or When [Picture Sleeve], 1959, $175.00
- 302 Where or When/You Better Not Do That//Wonderful Girl/That's My Desire, 1959, $125.00
- 3013 I Wonder Why/Teen Angel, 1958, $70.00
- 3015 No One Knows/I Can't Go On (Rosalie), 1958, $40.00
- 3027 A Teenager in Love/I've Cried Before [Mono Record], 1959, $30.00
- 3035 Every Little Thing I Do/A Lover's Prayer, 1959, $30.00
- 3035 Every Little Thing I Do/A Lover's Prayer [Picture Sleeve], 1959, $60.00
- 3044 Where or When/That's My Desire, 1959, $30.00
- 3044 Where or When/That's My Desire [Picture Sleeve], 1959, $60.00
- 3052 When You Wish Upon a Star/Wonderful Girl, 1960, $30.00
- 3052 When You Wish Upon a Star/Wonderful Girl [Picture Sleeve], 1960, $60.00
- 3059 In the Still of the Night/A Funny Feeling, 1960, $30.00
- 3059 In the Still of the Night/A Funny Feeling [Picture Sleeve], 1960, $60.00
- 3070 Lonely Teenager/Little Miss Blue, 1960, $30.00
- 3070 Lonely Teenager/Little Miss Blue [Picture Sleeve], 1960, $60.00
- 3081 Havin' Fun/Northeast End of the Corner [Picture Sleeve], 1961, $60.00
- 3090 Kissin Game/Heaven Help Me, 1961, $30.00
- 3090 Kissin Game/Heaven Help Me [Picture Sleeve], 1961, $60.00
- 3101 Somebody Nobody Wants/Could Somebody Take My Place Tonight, 1961, $30.00
- 3110 Runaround Sue/Runaway Girl [Mono Record], 1961, $30.00
- 3110 Runaround Sue/Runaway Girl [Picture Sleeve], 1961, $60.00
- 3110 Runaround Sue/Runaway Girl [Stereo Record], 1961, $60.00 —"Stereo" in white area at right of label
- 3115 The Wanderer/The Majestic [Mono Record], 1961, $30.00
- 3115 The Wanderer/The Majestic [Mono Record], 1979, $10.00
- 3115 The Wanderer/The Majestic [Picture Sleeve], 1961, $60.00
- 3123 Lovers Who Wander/(I Was) Born to Cry [Picture Sleeve], 1962, $60.00
- 3134 Little Diane/Lost for Sure, 1962, $30.00
- 3134 Little Diane/Lost for Sure [Picture Sleeve], 1962, $60.00
- 3145 Love Came to Me/Little Girl, 1962, $30.00
- 3153 Sandy/Faith, 1963, $30.00
- 3171 Come Go with Me/King Without a Queen, 1963, $30.00
- 3187 Lonely World/Tag Along, 1963, $30.00
- 3225 After the Dance/Then I'll Be Tired of You, 1964, $30.00
- 3240 Shout/Little Girl, 1964, $30.00
- 3495 From Both Sides Now/Sun Fun Song, 1969, $20.00
- 3504 Loving You Is Sweeter Than Ever/He Looks a Lot Like Me, 1969, $20.00
- EP 301 Dion and the Belmonts: Their Hits [Picture Sleeve], 1959, $200.00
- EP 301 I Wonder Why/No One Knows//Don't Pity Me/A Teenager in Love, 1959, $120.00
- S 3027 A Teenager in Love/I've Cried Before [Stereo Record], 1959, $60.00

LIFESONG

- 1765 Heart of Saturday Night/You've Awakened Something in Me, 1978, $5.00
- 1770 Midtown American Main Street Gang/Guitar Queen, 1978, $5.00
- 1785 (I Used to Be a) Brooklyn Dodger/Streetheart Theme, 1979, $5.00
- 45082 Fire in the Night/Street Mama, 1980, $30.00
- JZ 35356 Return of the Wanderer, 1978, $20.00

MOHAWK

- 106 Teenage Clementine/Santa Margarita, 1957, $70.00

THE RIGHT STUFF

- S7- 17651 Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)/Jingle Bell Rock, 1993, $5.00
- S7- 19769 Please Come Home for Christmas/Wintertime, 1997, $5.00

WARNER BROS.

- 7356 Natural Man/If We Only Have Love, 1969, $10.00
- 7401 Your Own Back Yard/Sit Down Old Friend, 1970, $10.00
- 7469 Let It Be/Close to It All, 1970, $12.00
- 7491 Josie/Sunniland, 1970, $10.00
- 7537 Sanctuary/Brand New Morning, 1971, $10.00
- 7537 Sanctuary/Brand New Morning [Picture Sleeve], 1971, $30.00
- 7663 Seagull/Running Close Behind You, 1972, $10.00
- 7704 Doctor Rock and Roll/Sunshine Lady, 1973, $10.00
- 7793 New York City Song/Richer Than a Rich Man, 1974, $10.00
- 8258 The Way You Do the Things You Do/Lover Boy Supreme, 1976, $5.00
- 8293 Oh the Night/Queen of '59, 1976, $5.00
- 8406 Young Virgin Eyes (I'm All Wrapped Up)/Oh the Night, 1977, $5.00
- BS 2642 Suite for Late Summer, 1972, $25.00
- PRO 537 Seagull/Soft Parade [Disc Jockey], 1972, $20.00
- PRO 814 The Wanderer (same on both sides) [Disc Jockey], 1979, $20.00
- WS 1872 You're Not Alone, 1971, $25.00
- WS 1945 Sanctuary, 1971, $25.00

Albums

COLUMBIA

- no # Dion Is Now on Columbia Records [Picture Sleeve], 1962, $60.00 —Promo-only sleeve issued with promos of Columbia 42662
- CL 2010 Ruby Baby [Mono Record], 1963, $30.00
- CL 2107 Donna the Prima Donna [Mono Record], 1963, $30.00
- CS 8810 Ruby Baby [Stereo Record], 1963, $60.00
- CS 8907 Donna the Prima Donna [Stereo Record], 1963, $60.00
- CS 9773 Wonder Where I'm Bound, 1969, $25.00
- KC 31942 Dion's Greatest Hits, 1973, $25.00

DAYSPRING

- DST 4022 Inside Job, 1980, $20.00

LAURIE

- LES 4013 Dion Sings the Hits of the '50s and '60s, 1978, $20.00
- LLP 200 2 Presenting Dion & The Belmonts [Mono Record], 1960, $200.00
- LLP 200 4 Alone with Dion [Mono Record], 1960, $300.00 —With three wallet-size photos on inside strip (deduct 50% if missing)
- LLP 200 6 Wish Upon a Star [Mono Record], 1960, $200.00
- LLP 200 9 Runaround Sue [Mono Record], 1961, $1,000.00 —Colored vinyl (gold, green or blue)
- LLP 200 9 Runaround Sue [Mono Record], 1962, $125.00 —Black vinyl; with sticker on front cover: "Includes the Hit Singles 'The Majestic'/'The Wanderer'"
- LLP 2012 Lovers Who Wander [Mono Record], 1962, $100.00
- LLP 2013 Dion Sings His Greatest Hits [Mono Record], 1962, $100.00
- LLP 2015 Love Came to Me [Mono Record], 1963, $100.00
- LLP 2016 Together On Records - By Special Request [Mono Record], 1963, $60.00
- LLP 2017 Dion Sings to Sandy (And All His Other Girls), [Mono Record], 1963, $60.00
- LLP 2019 Dion Sings the 15 Million Sellers [Mono Record], 1963, $60.00
- LLP 2022 More of Dion's Greatest Hits [Mono Record], 1964, $60.00
- SLP 2047 Dion [Both Stereo & Mono], 1968, $25.00
- ST 91577 Dion, 1968, $30.00
- T 90366 Dion Sings His Greatest Hits [Mono Record], 1965, $120.00

WARNER BROS.

- BS 2664 Reunion - Live at Madison Square Garden - 1972, 1973, $25.00
- WS 1826 Sit Down, Old Friend, 1969, $25.00

WORD

- WR 8285 Kingdom in the Streets, 1985, $20.00

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COLLECTIVE SOUL FRONTMAN **ED ROLAND** PROUD OF THE PAST AND CONFIDENT ABOUT THE BAND'S PATH FORWARD.

BY ANDEW DALY

CONFIDENT

With Ed Roland at the helm, Collective Soul have been banging around since 1992. And that's with good reason, as songs like "Shine," "December," "The World I Know," "Listen" and "Precious Declaration" have soundtracked a vast segment of the population.

There's no denying it: Roland, who was born in Stockbridge, Georgia, loves vinyl and possesses the sweetest Southern drawl you've ever heard, has penned tracks that can be heard everywhere from elevators to doctors' offices to alternative rock radio, and maybe more than a few episodes of VH1's *Pop-Up Video*.

With Roland's monster vocals out front, Collective Soul were part of not one but two 1990s Woodstock festivals: one of which did its part to harness the magic of the first (1994), and the other (1999) that went horribly wrong. Along the way, they've dropped 11 classic albums — often unfairly lumped in with grunge and post-grunge — with a double album titled *Here to Eternity* set for 2024.

The cast around Roland has changed — his guitar-playing brother Dean is still by his side — but his passion hasn't. Roland is a young 60, not just in mind but body and spirit, and in the face of a malfunctioning camera, which left me unable to see him, he opened our interview by saying, "Ah, no worries. But by the way, I look really good, in case you were wondering." Laughing, he continued, "I look really handsome today. I'm going full-frontal nudity!"

Roland's personality is effervescent, and judging by the sounds heard on Collective Soul's new studio album *Here to Eternity*, so is his voice. But in conversation, what that means comes into greater focus. Collective Soul's 12th record — which was recorded at Elvis Presley's house (no, not Graceland) in Palm Springs, California — isn't just about songs; it's about a vibe via vinyl.

THADDAEUS McADAMS / GETTY IMAGES

Ed Roland of Collective Soul performs as part of the 'HootieFest 2023' at Moon Palace The Grand on April, 29, 2023, in Cancún, Mexico.

Soul

Collective Soul's new album, *Here to Eternity*, was recorded at Elvis Presley's house in Palm Springs, California. The band, shown below, are sitting in front of the house.

Digging into that notion, meaning his love for vinyl, Roland tells *Goldmine*, "There's a difference between when you see a band live; it's just a different vibe. And that's what vinyl does for me more than digital. I'm a music junkie; the experience is based on vinyl.

"You put the needle down, and you're experiencing what the songwriter is talking about," he says. "You're experiencing the whole project instead of one song. It's about going back in time, feeling my excitement as a child, and hearing this music for the first time. I love the feeling and the adrenaline of putting the needle on a record."

But Collective Soul have been around for a minute. And yeah, you can lay down any vibe you like, but sometimes, listeners won't let the past go. That's fair, given Roland's '90s exploits, and he gets it, but that doesn't mean he's willing to bend. "You don't experience the whole body of work that way," he says. "We don't go in to make just one song that we think would satisfy the listeners, you know?"

He explains, "We make a collection of songs to satisfy the listeners, but first, to satisfy us. Because if we are not satisfied, we can't expect anybody else to be satisfied. So, it's a shame that this new youth is missing out on life and just listening to one song instead of the whole album."

Hell or high water, Collective Soul ain't going anywhere. There might have been a time when '90s bands were deemed uncool, but like any other era or genre: Whatever, the '90s are in, baby. Along with that wave of nostalgia is renewed attention on Roland, which is just fine by him — especially since Collective Soul, as evidenced by this new double album, are not stuck in the mud. "I think we've grown," Roland says. "I think we've grown in confidence. It's not ego, it's just confidence.

"There's a difference," he continues. "Confidence means you feel good about

LEE CLOWER

what you do, but you're still willing to learn. But ego ... that makes you think that you've already accomplished whatever you set out to do."

He concludes, "We have a lot of confidence, and it's made us a better band. So, I want people to know that we've loved what we did and that we're grateful, humbled and honored that we were allowed to do what we love to do."

GOLDMINE: *Starting with your new record,* Here to Eternity, *give me the rundown of how Collective Soul got to this point.*
ED ROLAND: Well, it all started with Elvis Presley, who owned two homes when he passed. Of course, everybody knows about Graceland. But he had the Elvis Presley estate in Palm Springs [California]. But when he passed, Priscilla [Presley] and Lisa Marie [Presley] wanted nothing to do with Palm Springs, so his house there was dormant since 1977 after his passing.

But his last Thanksgiving, his last Christmas, his last birthday and his last three records were recorded in this home. And I'd met the guys that owned it about five years ago, before COVID, and we were talking about coming in, doing a couple of Elvis tunes, whatever you got going on. So, COVID happened, and that went away, and I was talking to my brother Dean [Roland], who's in the band, and he said, "We're getting ready to go make a record, and we love recording in homes."

We've only done two proper recordings in a studio. I grew up in a studio. I know how the studio works. But I love how this band works; we love getting in a house and being together where there's no time clock, no checking in, and no checking out — you just kind of let it flow. So, I was like, "Let me call these cats at the Elvis house, and we'll just set up shop there." That's what we did.

GM: *Considering the house was left to rot, did you need to bring your own gear to record?*
ER: I have studio gear. So our production manager loaded it up and drove across the country, and we set up the studio and even staged furniture in there. Nothing was in there. It was just boring. But I got to sleep in Elvis Presley's bedroom, and we set up the control room in Lisa Marie's bedroom. We recorded in the studio, which was the main big room, and I sang outside.

And so, when we got there, I had 10 songs to show the guys, and in four days, they recorded the 10 songs — well, the basic tracks, I should say. And then I was like, "Guys, you're kicking my ass a little bit here. We still have three weeks!" So, I said, "Take a four-day pass. Enjoy Joshua Tree, Palm Springs, the Palm Desert, wherever you want."

Then I set up in what they called Elvis' party room. I am a vinyl guy; I only listen to vinyl. I don't stream; I just love to listen to vinyl. So I had my record player and a certain amount of my records out there. I sat there for four days and wrote 12 more songs, so when they came back in, we recorded those in a week. And then we just bounced around, having fun in the desert, having no idea we were starting a double album. It just happened; it was flowing. The band was on fire.

GM: *And as you went through that, surely some unintentional motifs became apparent. What were some of the themes that cropped up?*
ER: I think the first 10 songs were lyrical, for me. Melodically, they're pretty consistent with Collective Soul's sound, you know, rock riffs and things like that. But lyrically, for those four days, I sat back and listened to all my heroes: the Stones, Zeppelin, Elton John, Queen, Jeff Lynne and Tom Petty, and it really started with [The Rolling Stones'] "Miss You."

I'll never forget. I was in a house by myself — Elvis Presley's house by myself — and I was just dancing to "Miss You," and I had a case of wine. It was extravagant, and so I started thinking, "You know what? I'm gonna start being a little bit more open with lyrical content." The music came pretty easy for me, so the lyrical content started to flow with more sexual lyrics.

I don't know the correct term nowadays, so please don't get on to me, but like, two girls that had boyfriends in high school, and in my head, this is the story, where one of' em f**ked the other girl's boyfriend, and they disappeared, went and become wives, and later in life, they got back together and became partners. So it was things like that that happened in the second half of the record.

GM: *You mentioned that the sound of the record is in keeping with Collective Soul's past records. Is that a case of feeling beholden to what you've done, or do you go in with no preconceived notions?*
ER: No, we sit down, I present the song to the guys, and I tell them the feel I'm looking for. We'll put a record on like, for example, a Jeff Lynne song, and I'm like, "Here's his background vocals; I want something like this to be a part of the song." And we're old-school ... Johnny [Rabb] sets his drums up, we horseshoe around him and we listen to the song.

We'll talk about the vibe; we don't even think about the past. We're thinking about that song at that moment and the vibe we want. We spend about an hour going over it, and everybody figures out what they feel good about. We all agree that's a great vibe. And then we do three, maybe five takes at the most, and it's done.

GM: *Being art-focused rather than worrying about expectations is probably a good mindset, given the state of the music industry these days.*
ER: Well, we've always been that way, to be honest with you. But you find a comfort zone as an artist and band to what feels good; you still have that. I mean, the Stones sound like the Stones on their new record. It sounds like it could have been the same band from the '60s. But it's still moving forward if that makes sense. They're not trying to chase the next hip sound; they're just a band. And that's what we are. We're a rock and roll band — no ifs, ands, or buts, no more, no less.

GM: *You're a vinyl guy, so I assume that's how this record sounded on vinyl factored into its recording, too.*
ER: That is all I think about. Literally, that's how I want the record mixed, you know? And it's different from how people mix these days because it's so digital and, on your phone, or headphones. But I want it to sound like what I grew up listening to, like the artists I loved. I wouldn't be here if they didn't have the inspiration to give me that. And once again, we're a rock and roll band; it's not on a click all the time, it's not on time all the time, and it's not in tune all the time. But it's us; it's real.

GM: *And it's a double album, too, which lends itself to the vinyl experience of sitting down and digging in on a piece of music.*
ER: That's it. And hopefully, people

can understand that. As a child, when I started this whole path, you dream of being able to do a double album because when I grew up, you had, of course, [The Beatles'] The White Album, you had [Elton John's] *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, you had [Bruce Springsteen's] *The River*, [Peter Frampton's] *Frampton Comes Alive!*, you know, that was my era.

When I started learning music, I dreamed of one day being able to do a double album. And to be, and I use this word very humbly, being prolific and able to do a double album 30 years after we started, I'm blessed. I go back to the guys in the band: I'm blessed that they allow me to be in this band because they're so good. Just being around these guys, there's no way you can't be inspired because all I want to do is write songs. I'm a singer by default.

GM: *And with a double album and being vinyl minded as you are, how does that impact how you sequence the tracks?*
ER: Yeah, you know, I sat down, and it took me three different times just to get all the songs right. And it's 20 songs, which is a lot to sit through. Even though they're my songs, it's a lot to take. It took about three days of just moving sh*t around; it's like a chess match, like what fits and how you want the flow. That's what I was looking for, and [producer] Shawn Grove helped me a lot because we wanted it to flow to where just when you thought you're getting another rock song, you're get something a little bit off-center to keep your attention going.

GM: *What first attracted you to vinyl, and what's kept you coming back for more?*
ER: It's scientific; I'm gonna nerd out here for a second. When you do analog and vinyl, the frequencies hit in a certain way, and they have harmonics that go all over the board. So, if you do digital, it's one tone; it just stops, and then you have to have the other tone. But vinyl gives you chromatics that you don't recognize on digital, and it just sounds more real. It sounds like live music.

GM: *Do you prefer original pressings or reissues?*
ER: I have a lot of originals that I grew up with, like Queen, ELO and Elton John. And then, I'll get the remastered ones, like with Elvis Costello, I have all the originals, and then, I got the remastered ones. But I don't know ... because they struck me as a kid. I always go back to the original; I like the pops and cracks. I do like the new ones, don't get me wrong. But I think it's a mental thing if that makes sense. At my age, I like having a thing from my youth I can go back to.

GM: *Do you still go to record stores or mostly shop online?*
ER: I love record stores. My sons love them, too. We go in together, and it's a bonding experience. They've got records, too, and I think we've got five record players in our house. So, in every room, somewhere, there's a record player, and there are records with those.

GM: *Are you an audiophile to where you're really techie with gear, turntables and receivers?*
ER: No, I do not. I wasn't able to as a kid, and like I was saying, I try to recapture my youth, what I was feeling back then, and the excitement that I had that made me want to be a songwriter. I want to have music on vinyl, and I've got nice turntables that are like $200 or $300, but that's it; that doesn't matter to me. I've got great speakers everywhere. I have a record player; that's all I need.

GM: *One noticeable aspect of the vinyl revival is that certain eras are being revisited, like the '80s. Lately, it seems like a '90s bands, like Collective Soul, are putting their records out on vinyl, which were originally on CD. Has that been beneficial to you overall?*
ER: I think so. You know, once again, selfishly, I just love having our music on vinyl. I don't keep up with all the business sh*t. That's above my pay grade. (laughs) It's just very exciting for us when we get vinyl in. We all sit down as a band, like, "Hell yeah!" You know, back in the day, we got a CD, and there was never a "Hell

Ed Roland performing with Collective Soul on June 12, 1998, in Miami, Florida.

BILL TOMPKINS/GETTY IMAGES

Collective Soul pose for a photo shoot in Buffalo, New York, August 1994.

yeah!" It was like, "Oh, OK, this sounds good." Now, it's like excitement. Really. I mean, something about vinyl just brings excitement out, not only to the bands but the listeners.

GM: *It's a different level of tangibility. It's one thing to hear the music, but with vinyl, you get to see, feel, and immerse yourself in it.*
ER: I sit down every night at 11 o'clock when my wife and kids go to bed; I sit down for three hours, spin vinyl and look at the lyrics. I look at who did what work, engineered, produced and played on the record; you don't see that with digital. And once again, I'm all about the streaming, but you don't see who did the work. And you know, I'm a nerd on that. I want to see who did the work because they put their heart and soul into this record, so they should be recognized.

GM: *One of the cool things about Collective Soul is that you're one of five bands who played both Woodstock '94 and Woodstock '99. How do you look back on that?*
ER: Well, '94 was the one. Everything was happening so fast for us; we had just got signed, and I'll never forget when we drove into the parking lot and the band Live showed up. We got out and exchanged pics; they were blowing up on the scene, too. There was a lot of camaraderie backstage, like there were no egos. Nobody was trying to outdo each other, blow sh*t up or start fires. But '99 was that. There were a lot of egos, everybody trying to outdo each other; it wasn't about music. It was more of a marketing ploy. But '94 was very special.

GM: *Did you keep any memorabilia from the '94 or '99 Woodstock shows?*
ER: No, nothing from either one. In '94, we were so new and naive. But one of my favorite memories [in] '94 is we were literally following King's X. We're big fans of King's X. We loved King's X, and we were following them around like teenage girls. (laughs) And then Doug [Pinnick] finally turned around and said, "What do you guys want?"

And we were like, "We just wanted to say, hey!" We were so naive and silly and just fans of everybody there. And during '94, I remember the day that Elton John called me. This photographer came up and said, "Elton John loves your music." I said, "Oh, my God, this is crazy." He goes, "Would you mind if he called you?" I was like, "No!" So, my first introduction to Elton was at Woodstock '94.

GM: *I've read before that Elton is a big influence on you; what's your favorite Elton record to spin?*
ER: The first record I bought with my money was Elton John's *Greatest Hits*. So, I always put that on at least once a day. Had I not bought that record ... I loved all sorts of artists like John Denver and Olivia Newton-John, all of which are great. But I remember getting Elton John's, and then I came home, put the record on, and said, "That's what I'm gonna do." It literally was that quick. Literally after "Your Song" was done, and "Daniel" came second, and then "Honky Cat," I was like, "I want to write songs like this crazy cat."

GM: *Is that the record where he's wearing the white suit with the big glasses? That was one of my first records, too.*
ER: Yeah, see! It's still great that after all these years. And to be able to tell him that story, that was great. Of course, my parents were inspirational because my dad was opera trained, and my mom played piano in the church; they were the first influences. But for pop culture and pop music, it was Elton and Bernie [Taupin].

GM: *That goes to show the power of music on vinyl, and its ability to keep us connected.*
ER: Yeah, and I think one of the things that vinyl offers, too, and I've talked to my 14-year-old son, is that with digital, you're not experiencing the whole record, and you're not experiencing songs. When kids get to be my age, they're gonna go, "I like that song," but they're not going to know the band; they're not going to know the vibe.

GM: *From the beginning to the present, how has Collective Soul remained the same, and how has it changed?*
ER: We've grown because we've been around 30 years. I don't care what job you do; if you've been doing it for 30 years, you screw up. We've become more comfortable with who we are and what we are. We understand certain bands get elevated to a certain plateau, yet I'll say, "Well, sing me three of their songs," and they can't.

But I can go sing three Collective Soul songs, and so can many people, but they don't know who the f**k we are. That's a blessing and a curse. It's a blessing because I go anywhere; though, in the last couple of years, people are starting to recognize me more because we won't go away. (laughs) We're gonna haunt you 'til the day you die or until the good Lord says so.

STEVE EICHNER/GETTY IMAGES

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT'S CLASSIC LINEUP IS SPOTLIGHTED ON *GHOST STORIES*, A NEW AI-MEETS-ARCHIVES SET.

BY BILL KOPP

Blue Öyster Cult's singer-guitarist Eric Bloom and lead guitarist Buck Dharma.

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CULT INTELLIGENCE

Masters of what used to be called metal (known these days as melodic hard rock), Long Island, New York's Blue Öyster Cult have been making records and touring since the late 1960s. BÖC have a well-earned reputation for crafting intelligent, witty lyrics, wedding those to hard-as-nails yet catchy melodies. The group scored their first major commercial break with a live document, 1975's *On Your Feet or on Your Knees*. The next year, the band broke through in a big way with the mega-hit album *Agents of Fortune*, propelled by its single, the now-classic "Don't Fear the Reaper." Many more live and studio albums followed.

The group enjoyed a sustained creative peak in the late '70s and early 1980s. And it was during that period that BÖC let tape roll during various rehearsal sessions. But with no plans to release the songs they had recorded, those tapes were all but forgotten. Yet recently, BÖC rescued that unheard material from obscurity, and through the wonders of artificial-intelligence technology, they sought to bring the audio up to releasable standards. Though the resulting tracks feature some 21st- century tweaks, the songs on *Ghost Stories* likely represent the final set of previously unheard material from Blue Öyster Cult's original

lineup. *Goldmine* spoke with guitarist Buck Dharma and lead singer Eric Bloom about the new record.

GOLDMINE: *When interviewing both of you in 2020 around the time of the release of* The Symbol Remains, *you made the point that in general, making albums isn't really financially rewarding for Blue Öyster Cult. With that in mind, what led to the release of* Ghost Stories*?*

BUCK DHARMA: The label [Frontiers Music] was clamoring for something new, and we obliged them by coming up with *Ghost Stories*. And it was a big surprise that *Ghost Stories* sounds like a lost BÖC record from the day. The songs that are on it didn't make the source records of the time [*Mirrors, Cultösaurus Erectus, Fire of Unknown Origin* and *The Revölution by Night*], but that was mainly because you could only fit four or five songs on a vinyl side. If [those albums] had been [originally issued

Eric Bloom and Buck Dharma crossing guitars while onstage for a Blue Öyster Cult performance at Oakland Stadium on September 2, 1978, in Oakland, California.

ED PERLSTEIN/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

on] CD, they would have been on those records at that time.

ERIC BLOOM: We wanted to give them something that was worthwhile, without beating our brains out writing a whole new record. Our front-of-house soundman George Geranios is retired, and he's been sitting on some of this stuff. He talked to our manager and said, "This is the best way to get some of it out in a professional way." So Richie Castellano gave it the professional polishing it needed.

GM: *Since so much time has passed, when these tapes were brought back to you, did you even remember these songs?*

EB: I did remember the songs after listening, but a lot of what I did forget was, "Who wrote this?" I did remember, of course, that "Cherry" was a Buck song. But when you're sitting in a room and writing a song — or somebody brings in a song and you add something to it — the credits change. So we did have to put our heads together by telephone, email or whatever, and we had to go over this: "Who added the bridge to this? What are the writing credits on the song?" The songs weren't copyrighted back then because they weren't used for anything. To use the vernacular, these were outtakes.

GM: *Did any of those songs get as far as being worked on in the studio during that era?*

BD: Not in the 24-track studios, no. They're all pre-production recordings by our sound engineer. Some of them were two-track, and some of them were eight-track, half-inch. Where the multitrack tapes existed, we used the multitracks, and where they didn't, we used the stereo mixdowns, and then deconstructed those with the AI technology of today.

EB: Most of these songs were worked up in that time [1979-83]. They didn't quite make it, or we couldn't decide how they should be used, so they sort of fell by the wayside. We were rehearsing at George Geranios' loft, and luckily he ran tape.

GM: *These analog tapes were 40 years old. Did they physically require restoring?*

BD: Yes. George baked the tapes when he transferred them. Some were damaged because they weren't adequately stored over the years. The tape formulations of the '80s were not as durable as some of the older tape formulations. A lot of our masters were done on Ampex 456, which turned out not to be a durable medium. The binders of the magnetic material tend to gum up with time. They attracted moisture; it's notoriously problematic.

GM: *Why was the decision made to demix, remix and overdub these tracks?*

BD: In some cases, it was to restore de-

"We like doing covers; it's kind of a dressing-room thing. We always sang Beatles songs in the dressing room just to warm up on vocals and harmonies. We've actually done "If I Fell" during soundchecks. One time we did it at an outdoor venue, and the crews and everybody stopped what they were doing and came over to the stage. It's a fun song to do because it's got a lot of moving parts."

— ERIC BLOOM
ON RECORDING "IF I FELL" FOR
THE NEW ALBUM, *GHOST STORIES*

teriorated tape recordings, and in other cases, just to enhance them. The 2024 mix of the record gave Richie Castellano the ability to improve the sonics, the ambiance and the effects of today.

EB: Richie, our very bright young man in our band, got the software that has AI built into it. That allows us to take stereo tracks and separate bass from drums. As Richie explains it, we got the dime-store version of the AI software; we got better [instrument] isolation, and it allowed us to overdub digitally. For instance, "So Supernatural" has present-day Joe Bouchard on it. The vocal from back then had deteriorated too far, so Joe came in a couple of months ago and came in and re-sang. None of my vocals are new.

GM: *Was the band just so prolific in those days that you simply had more material than you could use?*

EB: I don't know about that. These were ... I won't use the word "rejected" because that's too harsh. Maybe we were just not satisfied with them at the time. Or we just couldn't agree; maybe two or three out of five guys said, "I don't want to work on this song anymore." These things happen when you have a democracy, of course.

BD: Historically, we didn't record a lot of extra stuff. When we'd make a record, we would pretty much decide which songs we thought were going to make the record, and then those were the ones we'd record. The treasure trove of *Ghost Stories* is what George Geranios had retained from those days, centered around the time when we were writing songs for the movie *Heavy Metal*. They picked "Veteran of the Psychic Wars" for the movie, but there were others. Listening to *Ghost Stories*, it's like a lost BÖC record that somehow got misplaced and then found, because it has all the original band members on it. It's got Allen Lanier, who's gone now. So it's nostalgic and bittersweet to hear it with a sheen of 2024 production on it.

Members of Blue Öyster Cult sit on the shore of Eatons Neck, New York, in this March 1973 photo. From left to right: Eric Bloom, Albert Bouchard, Joe Bouchard, Allen Lanier and Donald "Buck Dharma" Roeser.

DICK KRAUS/NEWSDAY RM VIA GETTY IMAGES

GM: *Ghost Stories includes a version of MC5's "Kick Out the Jams." That one has been in BÖC's set for a long time; you even included it on your live album,* Some Enchanted Evening. *What's special about that song?*

EB: I'm an old guy; I actually saw the MC5 live. They were great. And [our then-manager Sandy] Pearlman was a fan; he dragged us by the scruff of our necks to go see them, though it didn't take much persuading. The MC5 has to be the archetype for a hard rock band; they were very inspirational.

GM: *The Beatles' "If I Fell" seems an unusual choice of songs for BÖC to cover. Tell me about that.*

> **Historically, we sort of broke out because of the live record. That was our first gold record: *On Your Feet or On Your Knees*. And I think there was an energy — and even an ability — on our live recordings that didn't always come across in the studio recordings.**
>
> — BUCK DHARMA

EB: We did that when Kasim [Sulton] was in the band. We like doing covers; it's kind of a dressing-room thing. We always sang Beatles songs in the dressing room just to warm up on vocals and harmonies. We've actually done "If I Fell" during soundchecks. One time we did it at an outdoor venue, and the crews and everybody stopped what they were doing and came over to the stage. It's a fun song to do because it's got a lot of moving parts. And it was especially great when Kasim was in the band, because he's such a great singer. I'm glad it found its spot on this record.

BD: My rule of covers is, "First, do no harm, and then bring something new." We enjoy playing other people's music if we think we could do something with it. "If I Fell" was done at a taping at Red Studios in L.A. at the time of the 40th anniversary of *Agents of Fortune*.

GM: *Have BÖC played any of the original songs on* Ghost Stories *live onstage?*

BD: No, [back then] we didn't play them live as far as I know. I could be wrong. Some completist might say, "No, you actually played it on this date, at this show." But I wouldn't be surprised if we would perform some of these new songs this year.

EB: It's possible we played them live to try them out somewhere, which [laughs] may have been the reason why they weren't used!

GM: *Is there more unreleased material in the BÖC vault?*

EB: I really don't know. Never say never. There are songs that we wrote for movies and stuff like that; those have come out on as extra tracks [on CD reissues]. I don't know how much stuff is left. I think the well is dry, but you never know.

BD: *Ghost Stories* is the cream of the crop, the small crop. I don't know if George has stuff that I've forgotten about. I don't have a notebook from what was done at the time. Is there anything more? We'll see.

GM: *Over the course of Blue Öyster Cult's career, there have been at least nine live albums. Is the group more in their element in the studio or live onstage?*

BD: Historically, we sort of broke out because of the live record. That was our first gold record: *On Your Feet or on Your Knees*. And I think there was an energy — and even an ability — on our live recordings that didn't always come across in the studio recordings. But I like studio records myself. I wouldn't say the live records are better than the studio records; they're just different.

EB: I think we've proved to have success both ways. Our bestselling record is a live record; it's that single one that was supposed to be a double album, *Some Enchanted Evening*. And *On Your Feet* certainly is raw; a lot of people think it's a great live record, and it marks a certain time in our career. *Extraterrestrial Live* is a good record, too.

GM: *The press release for* Ghost Stories *refers to the album "bookending" Blue Öyster Cult's career. That's an interesting choice of words. Should that be taken to mean that this is the final release from the band?*

EB: I think that's "record label-speak," so I'm not going to give it any credence. I'm only going to say that if you're sitting on an airplane and you get an idea for a song and you have a napkin nearby, it doesn't mean you're not going to start writing something else that might come out someday.

BD: At this moment, we're not planning to do any more recording, but that could change. As far as live shows, we're committed to 2024; we'll probably do between 20 and 30 shows. We haven't committed to anything in '25 yet. Eric and I are getting old, and I'm just wondering if I'll ever do anything else but get up and play. Because that's basically what I've done for 50-odd years.

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

ALBUMS

COLUMBIA

- PC34164 Agents of Fortune, 1976, $50 — Original gatefold with no bar code on cover
- KC31063 Blue Oyster Cult, 1972, $75 — Reissue with new prefix
- FC39979 Club Ninja, 1986, $30
- JC36550 Cultosaurus Erectus, 1980, $30
- KG37946 Extraterrestrial Live, 1982, $35
- FC37389 Fire of Unknown Origin, 1981, $50
- FC40618 Imaginos, 1988, $75
- JC36009 Mirrors, 1979, $25
- KG33371 On Your Feet or on Your Knees, 1975, $25
- KC32858 Secret Treatises, 1974, $70
- CQ32858 [Quad] Secret Treatises, 1974, $80
- JC35563 Some Enchanted Evening, 1978, $40
- JC35019 Spectres, 1977, $60
- FC38947 The Revolution by Night, 1983, $40
- KC32017 Tyranny and Mutation, 1973, $75
- CQ32017 [Quad] Tyranny and Mutation, 1973, $80

Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

WAR founding member/keyboardist Lonnie Jordon and producer Jerry Goldstein (below) stand in front of the artwork for *The World Is a Ghetto* album.

30 DAYS IN THE 'GHETTO'

Experience WAR's album *The World Is a Ghetto* like never before with its celebratory 50th-anniversary collector's edition, as we uncover the history, the highs and the lows in an exclusive interview with producer Jerry Goldstein and associate producer Jeremy Levine.

BY TONE SCOTT

WAR/JERRY GOLDSTEIN/LONNIE JORDAN. COURTESY OF TONE SCOTT / MUSIC LIFE ENTERPRISES, LTD.

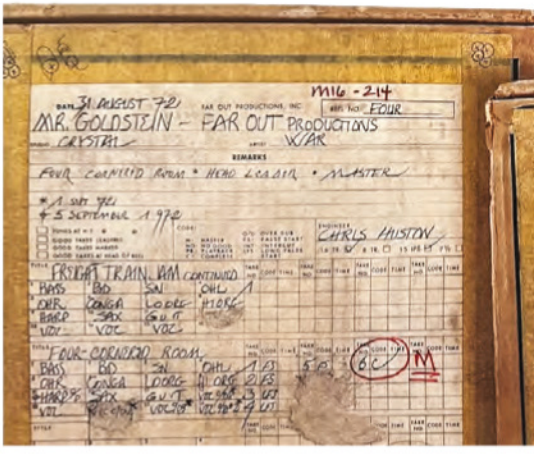
In December 2023, *Goldmine* presented a sneak peek into WAR's newly released 50th-anniversary collector's edition of *The World Is a Ghetto* — a 5-LP box set commemorating the massive achievements garnered by the band, their producer and the original album, having been crowned *Billboard*'s top-selling album for 1973 [although the album was officially released in November 1972]. If you were not privy to the sneak peek we provided, then let's recap, and continue where we left off.

B.B. Dickerson

One might ponder, *What could they possibly have included in this box set that warranted five full albums worth of music and material?* That would be a very valid query. Nevertheless, when you finally come to experience what this massive box set entails, you will be consumed with gratitude that the masterminds behind this 50th-anniversary commemoration had the intuition and the insight to find a way that allowed fans of WAR the ability to live what the band lived and breathe what the band breathed over the 29 days in the studio that it took to bring *The World Is a Ghetto* to life.

WAR, the legendary jazz, funk and soul collective, originated in the late 1960s, from Los Angeles. After making a local name for themselves, the band were essentially "officially discovered" through the leadership and influence of iconic music industry veteran — writer, producer, arranger and recording artist Jerry Goldstein. Happening more quickly than one would imagine, the marrying of Goldstein with WAR, in what seemed to be a divinely orchestrated partnership, commenced. The band, with unexpected progress, witnessed themselves excel to a place of international recognition. Their debut and sophomore album releases were a direct musical partnership with Eric Burdon, formerly of The Animals, and WAR's early touring successes with Burdon became the wick and flame that would ignite WAR (after Burdon's early departure) into a state of recognition that would bring the band to a stand-alone debut album.

The band's heightened reputation and their growing worldwide following naturally led to their sophomore studio



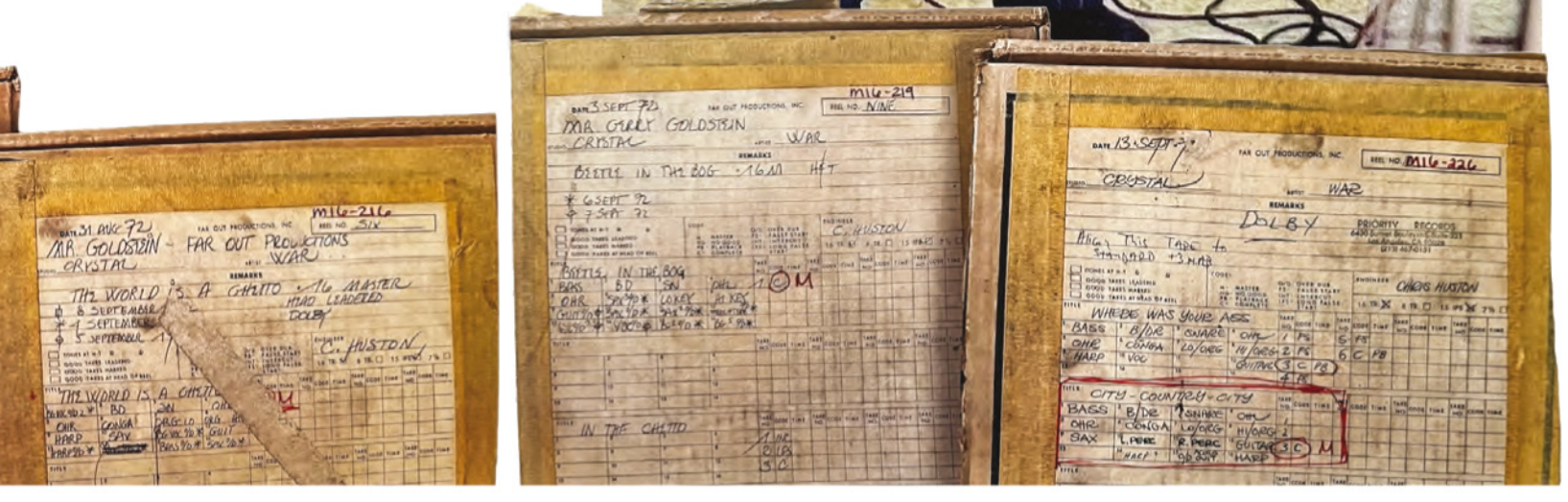
PHOTOS COURTESY OF WAR, FAR OUT PRODUCTIONS, AVENUE RECORDS AND RHINO RECORDS

effort, *All Day Music*. This new album would come out of the gate showing extreme promise for the band outside of their earlier involvement with Burdon, all due to the visions and multi-collaborative efforts between Goldstein and WAR. *All Day Music* would connect with fans, the media and the industry, infusing their audience with hit songs such as "Nappy Head," "Slippin' Into Darkness" and the title track.

But when outside influences inspired legal problems between Goldstein and WAR, what can go wrong, did go wrong. In the aftermath of confusion, pressure and dissension, finally genuine resolve would lead Goldstein and WAR back into the studio in late 1972. In about one month's time, Goldstein and the band would write, produce and record an album that would not only become WAR's third studio effort but would prove to the world that WAR had crossed the threshold from being just a band from L.A. to an internationally renowned and regarded musical influence and top-selling recording act.

Again, it took just 29 solid days for Jerry Goldstein, WAR and the recording personnel to manifest what would eventually transition into *Billboard*'s Top Selling Album of 1973. In 1973, WAR's third studio album would outperform the likes of Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*, Led Zeppelin's *Houses of the Holy* and Marvin Gaye's *Let's Get It On* (just to name a few). It became a culture shock not only to the industry and the consumer market, but to the band as well. It was an upset to the industry standards of popular music, but in the sweetest, most fragrant and magnificent way.

Lee Oskar



> **The entire album concept of *The World Is a Ghetto* is about all walks of life being the same: Everyone is searching essentially for the same thing, and everyone is susceptible to life's dilemmas, you could have a flat tire on a Rolls Royce, that's *The World Is a Ghetto*.**
>
> — JERRY GOLDSTEIN

Landing a 50-year trajectory from the past into the now brings us here, where once again, through the intuition of Goldstein, singer-keyboardist Lonnie Jordan and (after much persuading) the team at Rhino Records, fans can experience WAR's *The World Is a Ghetto* in rudimentary real time with never-before-heard bonus material and all the elements and experiences of the actual recording process hidden until now in *The World Is a Ghetto 50th Anniversary Collector's Edition: The Complete Sessions*.

GOLDMINE: *Jerry, so the story goes that you originally were invited to see a band playing backup for Deacon Jones in Los Angeles — the group of guys who would eventually become the band WAR. Is that how it all started?*

JERRY GOLDSTEIN: Actually, I saw the band before that. At that point in time, I hadn't made a record for about a year and a half because I'd started a poster and merchandising company that was contracted with all the big bands of that time; I mean everyone from the Stones, Three Dog Night, Herman's Hermits, The Bee Gees, The Animals, Cream, almost everyone you could think of. In fact, one night at the Lyceum Theater in London, I was coerced by [British music producer] Mickie Most that I had to sign his new band [to a merch deal], who no one ever heard of, called Led Zeppelin ... those were the types of bands I was dealing with. Having this poster and merchandising company, I had salesmen, obviously, who were on the road and on tour, etc., making sales for the company. One of my salespeople was a guy named Peter Rosen, and he kept telling me, "You gotta see my band, I have a really interesting band," and I would say, "OK, we'll figure it out someday" because, again, I was so consumed with my poster company that I hadn't made a record in almost two years. One day, I gave in and said, "OK, let's book a rehearsal studio." So, I booked S.I.R. studios and I told him to go set up and let me know when you're ready and I'll come down. So, I went down, and after listening to them, I thought to myself, you know, *this is like nothing I've ever heard*. I didn't have a clue what to do with them, and I wasn't making records at the time, but this could entice me to do something again. And so, I told the staff at S.I R. to let the band rehearse whenever they want to rehearse. I told the band, "If you want to rehearse every day, that's OK, I'll pay for it ... and when you've got something for me to hear that you think is really interesting, let me know and I'll come back."

GM: *So, how soon after, and at what point, did Eric Burdon become part of the equation?*

JG: So, the band was rehearsing, and literally within days, Eric Burdon shows up in my office — as crazy as it sounds, it was that quick. He was despondent and wanting to go back to England. He comes in and says, "I'm going back to Newcastle, The Animals just broke up, and I can't do this anymore. It's like everyone is stealing all my money, and I'm broke." So, back to Peter Rosen. Peter told me that the band [WAR] was playing a show that night at The Rag Doll [Club]. I went back to Eric and said, "You know, there's a band that I listened to, and I think that you might really like working with these guys, because they're really different. Why don't you come to The Rag Doll tonight and check it out, and see if you like it?"

Now, Lee Oskar was living at Eric's house at the time, and I had known Lee from previous session work some years back. So, Eric and Lee show up, we all watch the show, and I really don't see any expression from Eric. Then, Lee Oskar gets up onstage to jam with the band, and the band thinks he's Eric Burdon, because they really didn't know the difference, (laughs) and that went on all night. So, we all go home, and I call Eric the next day and say, "So, what do you think?" and he says to me, "Oh, I'm rehearsing with the guys at 4 o'clock today, at S.I.R.," and that was it! Two weeks later, we're on our way down to The Swing [Auditorium] club in San Bernardino for our first practice gig, and then the very next gig was back in L.A. at the Devonshire Downs Pop Festival, with The Doors, Creedence Clearwater on the show, with Jimi Hendrix as the headliner. From that point on, it was Eric Burdon & WAR, and the band never played one Animals tune; it was an entirely new band with a brand-new repertoire. And we were literally on the road for about a year before I ever brought them into the studio [to record an album].

GM: *Fast-tracking a little bit, you and the band with Eric eventually released the debut,* Eric Burdon Declares "WAR," *which gave us the massive hit "Spill the Wine." You followed that up with* The Black-Man's Burdon*; however, Eric would soon leave the band. So, what was the motivation to continue without Eric Burdon, after his departure?*

JG: This is what happened ... we wound up going on a big European tour, it was literally a sellout tour. I mean, you couldn't buy a ticket for this tour. We would do four encores a night — people just wouldn't go home, they never saw anything like this. So, we're selling out, we're blowing people away, we're the talk of Europe, we're in every trade magazine, we're on every television show. We finally get to England, and Eric is exhausted. These are three-hour shows, he's running around the stage, up and down, going crazy every night. So, [as I mentioned], we get to England and I think we played the London gig, and then after that, Eric disappears ... and we had to play Brighton the next day. So, the next day, I get a phone call from my partner, Steve Gold, back in L.A., and he says, "Well, Eric is here in the living room."

GM: *What? He just took off, back to L.A.?*

JG: He just took off. And so, I told the

other guys I didn't want to cancel. The show has been sold out for a month; the word is out that it's an amazing show. I said, "Let's put something together, we'll tell everybody that Eric can't perform tonight because he's not feeling well, and that they could have a refund if they wanted, but we are going to play the show." So, we get on, we play the show, not one person leaves, and we get three encores — and that right there was the first show they ever played as WAR. Then we played two or three more gigs like that; in fact, we even played Newcastle [Burdon's hometown], and nobody left, nobody was even complaining [that Burdon wasn't there]. And then eventually, Steve Gold convinced Eric to go back, and we finished the rest of the tour. After that, we went on the road in America for a while, and Eric was saying, "You know, I think I want to do my own thing," so he formed his band called The Eric Burdon Band.

WAR moved on, and they were gaining confidence, but not the record company, because after the first album, which really didn't do that well, there were no real singles. The record company was complaining to me that we needed to get writers. I said, "We are writers, I am a writer, and that's what we do. You don't like the albums from the past, but we're going to cut this record in studio, and we're going to create the new material ourselves," and soon "All Day Music" was the first single off the next album. Then, of course, next up was "Slippin' Into Darkness," which I had to work really hard with editing to make that an actual single, but I made it work. And then "Get Down" is what we were hoping to be the third single, but the record company was afraid to put it out because of the lyrical content [starts singing]: "Police and their justice, laughing while they bust us, you gotta get down ...," so that would have been the third single, but after all that, "The World Is a Ghetto" was the band's next single, so that was OK, too. And that's how we get to *The World Is a Ghetto*.

GM: *So, let's recap: You didn't have the greatest success with the band's stand-alone debut, but it was OK because it established the band without Burdon, but then you had great success with the band's sophomore album,* All Day Music. *Then coming into the next record, with the success of* All Day Music *behind you, what was your plan going into creating* The World Is a Ghetto, *or did you have one?*

JG: I'm not sure we really had a plan. First of all, we hit the road during *All Day Music*, and we were selling out shows left and right, breaking attendance records. In fact, we broke a record at the Spectrum [in Philadelphia] that the band still holds to this day. Anyway, somewhere down the line, some lawyer or someone got into their head, and the band sued me for a better deal. All they had to do was come in and ask me. They could have just as easily walked in and said, "Let's redo this thing," and I would have said, "Sure, let's go, let's figure it out," which we ended up doing anyway. So, because of that there was a six-month to a year hiatus, you know, it's like, they're working but we're not communicating. But, anyway, we're finally OK, they go out to Long Beach to rehearse. I send the mobile recording truck there so they can record and listen to what they're doing, and that's when they came up with a loose concept, but nothing solid until we got into the studio. The concept of [the song] "The World Is a Ghetto" came from a fictional character created by Papa Dee [Allen], a superhero character called Ghetto Man who lived in the ghetto and saved everyone. So, Ghetto Man was the origin of

Papa Dee Allen (percussion), Howard Scott (guitar) and Charles Miller (saxophone).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WAR, FAR OUT PRODUCTIONS, AVENUE RECORDS AND RHINO RECORDS

WARming up (L-R): Harmonica player Lee Oskar, bassist B.B. Dickerson and saxophonist Charles Miller of WAR warm up in the dressing room before performing at the Omni Coliseum on August 1, 1975, in Atlanta, Georgia.

TOM HILL/GETTY IMAGES

"The World Is a Ghetto," just like "Cisco Kid." "Cisco Kid" was a television show character when these guys were like 10 years old, and "Cisco Kid was a friend of mine ..." because he was the only non-Anglo superhero that the guys could relate to as kids — it was about the TV show. The entire album concept of *The World Is a Ghetto* is about all walks of life being the same: Everyone is searching essentially for the same thing, and everyone is susceptible to life's dilemmas, you could have a flat tire on a Rolls Royce, that's *The World Is a Ghetto*.

GM: *You've now accomplished* The World Is a Ghetto*, and it's not only charting with* Billboard *as the No.1 album, but it became* Billboard's *highest selling album of the year [1973].*

JG: Yeah, and on a small independent label called United Artists. It was amazing. I think we sold 5 million that year, if we'd been directly on a major label, we'd have probably sold 10 million. We became album of the year, above Pink Floyd *The Dark Side of the Moon*, above Stevie Wonder, above Paul Simon and everybody else, but we never even got a [Grammy] nomination — the singles did [with no wins], but not the album. The craziest thing is the album only took 29 days to make, from the first note to mastering. We did it consecutively, in one studio, in only 29 days. We worked every day as long as we could, went home, came back and did it again. And we really didn't rush to make it; we were just ready to make it. I think the previous "battle" between us made it more evident that we had to do something incredible ... and we did.

GM: *Upon 50 years of* The World Is a Ghetto*, you, Lonnie Jordan and Rhino Records commemorated it with a 50th-anniversary collector's edition expanded box-set release. What was the catalyst for this project?*

JG: OK, so, Alicia [Yaffe] at Rhino/Warner Music Group, who is Avenue Records' label manager over there, she said to me, "Look, this is your 50th anniversary of the album of the year, so maybe we do something to commemorate that." So, the initial thought was, maybe we find some bonus tracks to add, or some alternative takes, and make it a double album or whatever.

(Note: At this point, Associate Producer, Jeremy Levine, arrives to join in the conversation.)

JG: So, Alicia comes up with this idea. Then Jeremy and I took all of the master reels and digitized them; then we go into the studio for about a couple of weeks, and we just listened to all the original takes from the beginning, in chronological order, just the way it was recorded. So, listening to the entire recording this way, from beginning to end, gave us this concept of bringing everybody into the studio and show them how we made the record.

JEREMY LEVINE: It's basically the audio experience of how it was created in the studio. It wasn't as if they were trained studio musicians who knew how to convey every [technical] note, but they knew how to communicate musically in simple terms, as a jam band. By listening to them doing this, you get this feeling where you can relate to the whole experience, as if you had a band.

JG: So we came up with this concept, and we took it back to Rhino, and we said that it's probably going to be a 5-LP set — and they, of course, all had a nervous breakdown.

JL: (laughs) Oh my gosh, they were like, "No way." There were arguments, people were pulling their hair out, they wouldn't allow it. We fought so hard, for so long; they just couldn't conceive of our idea.

GM: *Wow. So, how long did this go on?*

JG: From about a year ago. Once we decided that this is what it was going to be, it just took a long time to convince everyone around us that this was the right way to go with this project. We had to use the fact that above every other album in the world, this was the biggest album of the year [in 1973], but was so underacknowledged, and we think it's time that everybody knows that truth, and that we don't want to put out something that is just OK. We wanted to put out something better than OK.

JL: Rhino thought it would be too expensive, they wanted the retail number to be under $125.00, and that WAR just didn't have the fan base to support this big of a project. But all credit to Mark Pinkus [at Rhino Records]: Once he realized what this was, he turned around and pushed for it. And only he [referring to Goldstein] could have put this together because he

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 98]

FORMER KISS GUITARIST **ACE FREHLEY** ELECTRIFIES HIS FANS WITH THE NEW ALBUM, *10,000 VOLTS*.

BY KEN SHARP

JAYME THORNTON

ACE VOLTAGE!

"It's probably my best album that I've made in many years, maybe my strongest since my 1978 solo record," enthuses former Kiss guitarist and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee Ace Frehley. And that's not false modesty speaking. *10,000 Volts,* Frehley's new studio album, is truly the Spaceman's most impressive release in years, filled with a clutch of radio-friendly juggernauts and teeming with fierce guitar riffs and swagger fueled lead guitar magic. Standout songs such as "Cherry Medicine," "Walkin' on the Moon," "Back into My Arms Again," "Cosmic Heart" and the title track "10,000 Volts" were recorded in tandem with co-producer and collaborator Steve Brown (Trixter) to create a uniformly strong release.

Join us for a conversation with Space Ace about the new record, street gangs, pawn-shop scores and more.

THEN AND NOW

Ace Frehley onstage with Kiss in 1978

LYNN GOLDSMITH/CORBIS/VCG VIA GETTY IMAGES

Frehley performing with his solo band on August 5, 1992.

JOHN ATASHIAN/GETTY IMAGES

GOLDMINE: *In the past five to 10 years, you've been incredibly productive with a succession of albums. What do you attribute that to?*

ACE FREHLEY: Lots of things: losing 45 pounds, exercise, taking my vitamins, eating organically and working out. I just feel like I got a new lease on life. I went to my doctor five or six weeks ago, and we were going over my bloodwork, and he just started cracking up. And I go, "What the f**k's going on?" He goes, "I'm looking at your bloodwork over the last three years, and you seem to be aging in reverse." (laughs)

GM: *With the* 10,000 Volts *album that you've done with Steve Brown of Trixter as co-producer and songwriting collaborator, prior to partnering with him, you were working on the record initially yourself, and it wasn't knocking you out.*

AF: That's right. Well, originally I was working by myself, and then I had Peppy Castro in the studio with me, and we came up with a couple of songs, which will still make it onto another record. One was called "Venus with a Whip," which was kind of funny. I love the whip sound he found. I think he got it from a sound library. There were two songs that I thought were good enough to make the record, but then he had to go down to Florida. He was getting divorced, and we lost track. And then my girlfriend, Lara, suggested I work with Steve Brown because she was a

Frehley performs in concert at Haute Spot Event Venue on July 13, 2023, in Cedar Park, Texas.

GARY MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

big fan of Trixter, and she had met all the guys when she was in her twenties. She's been friends with Steve probably longer than me. She just said, "Hey, Steve's a great guy. He's a great songwriter, great guitar player, great producer and a great engineer. You need to work with him." So finally I called him up. He sent me a couple of rough mixes of songs he was working on. One of those ideas had the line "walking on the moon," but it was called something different, and that line wasn't the end of the chorus. It was in the middle of the chorus. And I said, "Listen, Steve, get your ass over to my studio. We have to write a song, and we have to call it 'Walkin' on the Moon.'" We pretty much rewrote all the lyrics, and "walking on the moon" was the hook. After we had recorded it, it sounded good, but it needed something. I said, "Steve, this song needs a bridge," and he goes, "No, it doesn't." I go, "Trust me, it needs a bridge. I got a few more years on you." (laughs) So I wrote a quick bridge, and it turned out great. And afterwards he said, "Ace, you were 100 percent right." Once we got that under our belt, we just realized that we had a camaraderie, and we were both in sync and on the same page when it came to what kind of record I want to do. And he's a huge fan of mine. I mean, his two major influences are me and Eddie Van Halen. So working with Steve was like a marriage made in heaven.

GM: *With the* 10,000 Volts *album, you're working with Steve as a co-producer and someone who is also a seasoned guitar player and someone who knows your history and knows what your fans want from you. How do you think that has worked to your benefit?*
AF: Well, it worked to my benefit because, for example, a lot of times he may come up with a song idea and throw down a solo idea that he wanted me to copy and expand upon it. I remember when he sent me the solo idea he had for "Walkin' on the Moon." I thought his idea for the solo was so good that I just decided not to copy it, but keep his solo. But I played all the other solos on the record. I'm very in tune with Steve both as a guitar player, co-producer and co-writer. He can play all my solos. He's an excellent musician. And what even was more surprising is when we were hanging out one day and I said, "Play me some Eddie Van Halen solos," and he could play them note for note, so he can do stuff that I can't do well. He really studied how intricate some of Eddie's solos could be.

GM: *"10,000 Volts" was clearly a special track for you; why did you choose to make it the title of the album?*
AF: Well, I think the solo is really unique. I listened to that solo the other day, and I don't know what possessed me to play that solo that way because it's just so different than most of my solos.

GM: *Tell us about your home studio.*
AF: For my studio I dropped $200,000 into it. I did a lot of work myself. I designed it completely from beginning to end. The control room looks like a f**king spaceship. (laughs) When I first moved in with Lara, we were living in a 2,500-square-foot house and there was no basement, so I couldn't set up a studio to even work. I got really frustrated. Luckily, we were looking on Zillow, and in the same town we found

> **Nothing scares me. I just kind of go with the flow. If I entered a different universe and then came back, so be it, I just go with the flow. That's the kind of person I am. Even if I got abducted into a UFO, I would try not to be scared. I really believe that most aliens are good because they're an advanced society.**
>
> — ACE FREHLEY ON FACING HIS OWN MORTALITY

this beautiful house with five acres, and the f**king basement is 3,000 square feet and it has nine-foot ceilings. When I saw this place, I borrowed some money from a friend. I had just made a deal with a publishing company and got a large sum of money, and I bought the house. During the pandemic, I bought the house and we got it at an insider price, and right now I've already made $400,000 on the value of the home. It took me two years to build the studio because I didn't hire an architect. I hired people that I knew that were friends of mine that knew how to build sh*t. I really didn't know how the studio was going to end up; it was an ongoing process. I remember when I recorded my '78 solo album at the Colgate estate, and we did all the acoustic guitars in the library. That was one of the first houses that had indirect lighting. The lighting was hidden in the molding and it lit the ceiling, but it was indirect lighting. You couldn't see the bulbs. It was in the molding. So I ended up stealing that idea for the control room. I put in all these special GE light bulbs that has its own remote control, and you can get 13 colors out of every bulb. I usually alternate from orange to blue. I am so in love with this studio. It's such a pleasure to work there. I've built studios and worked in so many great studios that other people have designed and I've gotten ideas from the best. I knew what I wanted. When I first started out with the project, Lara's ex-husband was a builder and he wanted to take on the project. He came over and looked at the space and he said, "No problem. You've got easy access. The way the house is sloped at an angle so you can drive into the basement. There's a double door from the backyard." So it was such an easy access, and you could bring in materials very easily. The person that lived here before me used to collect antique cars, and he kept them in a basement. After he moved out, all [of] it was 3,000 square feet of empty concrete. I started laying blue tape on the concrete trying to figure out the drum room and the iso booth. I built a stage where I rehearsed with my band prior to the Alice Cooper tour. Then in the middle is the control room, which is about 18 feet by 26 feet, which is a really good size for a control room. And what I realized over the years as I recorded, most people do all the recording inside the control room. When you're recording a solo with a Marshall amp, we'll put the speaker cabinets in an iso booth, but we keep the heads in the control room so you can sit there with the engineer and just do the solos. You don't have to communicate through a glass window or intercom system. I made the control room really big. It's got puffed velvet couches in the back where people can sit back and relax, like if I invite a couple of people from the record company over to listen to some mixes. There's probably about 50 guitars in there.

GM: *With the songs on* 10,000 Volts*, didn't you use Lara and her girlfriends as a sounding board to gauge the material?*
AF: Yes. Lara is still friends with a lot of her girls that she went to high school with. You know, there's always chicks over here, and invariably, every time we had two or three girlfriends over, they'd end up down in the studio. And I'll never forget, I had a rough mix of "Cherry Medicine" and invariably all the girls said, that's the one.

GM: *Why do you think they connected so strongly with that one?*
AF: I think they really connected with that song because of the line, "You make me feel better when you're in your black leather." I just got off the phone with the record company, and they got a $20,000 budget for the "Cherry Medicine" video, which is going to coincide with the release of the record. We're going to have six chicks in black leather and some cool stuff. I don't want to give too much away.

GM: *I know you're excited about the world of social media. Talk a bit about how you're kind of employing social media with your new album.*
AF: I was never a big fan of social media because I just thought it was people that have nothing better to do than make comments. In some cases, that's still true, but for this album, they've hired a special person that specializes in social media. I've been making silly videos with Lara, and it's amazing the reaction we're getting from them. I'm now on TikTok, and already I have over a million views. It's getting nuts that quickly. We only have one song out, "10,000 Volts," from the record. Next will be the second video, which is going to be "Walkin' on the Moon," and then that will be followed by "Cherry Medicine," and that's going to be an amazing video. I think "Cherry Medicine" is going to knock "10,000 Volts" out of heavy rotation and take over.

GM: *There's a great song on the new album called "Back Into My Arms Again" that all the fans are super excited that you pulled out of the woodwork. It's a song from 1987 that you co-wrote with your keyboard player, Arthur Stead.*
AF: Yeah, I wrote it with Arthur Stead. When I first left Kiss, I put a band together with Anton Fig, Arthur Stead, John Regan — God rest his soul — Richie Scarlet and me. And while that band was together, I wrote "Back Into My Arms Again" with the help of Arthur Stead. I don't really recall how much Arthur added to the song. I started writing it on a 12-string guitar, and I think most of the song was written by me. How it wound up on my new album is Steve and I were in his basement, and he had YouTube up and he was just sorting through old Ace songs. And then he goes, "What's this demo, 'Back Into My Arms Again.'" I said, "Oh, that's something I wrote 35, 40 years ago." He goes, "You never put it on a record?" And I go, "No," and he started listening to it and he goes, "This is a great song; we need to record it for the new album," and that's what happened.

GM: *Do you have plans as yet for a follow-up record?*
AF: I just got off the phone with my record company a few hours ago, and they wanted me to do a live album instead of *Origins Volume Three*, but I talked them out of it. I said to them, "Listen, when Kiss did *Alive* and *Alive II*, we didn't allow

recording of shows." But every time I do a concert now, everybody's recording the show with their iPhone. So even if I make some mistakes or sing flat here or there live, I can doctor it up in the studio and do overdubs and so forth, but all the kids are going to have the original concert, and they're going to A-B it and say, "This isn't live." So yeah, I talked them out of the idea, and today we decided to definitely go through with *Origins Volume Three*. I can't tell you just yet but I'm going to have some very special guest stars.

GM: *I was recently scrolling through some old demos of yours on YouTube, and there's some great stuff from that era: "Audio Video," "I Got the Touch," "The Girl Can't Dance." Any thoughts on revisiting this material and doing a whole album of the lost demos?*
AF: That's an interesting idea. Back then we actually did a demo of "The Boys Are Back in Town" by Thin Lizzy. We tracked that. I forget some of the other songs we tracked, but we couldn't get a record deal. One of the main reasons I'm really close to Eddie Trunk to this day is he was the one that got me signed with Megaforce. He was the vice president of Megaforce at the time. Johnny Z came over my apartment on 67th Street, and we had a little meeting. I played him some of my demos, and he said, "Yeah, let's do a record together and see how things work out."

GM: *The new song "Fightin' for Life" is like the companion song to "Hard Times," a song you cut with Kiss which touches on your life growing up in the Bronx being a part of a gang called the Ducky Boys.*
AF: Yeah, the lyrics for that song talk all about my life growing up in the Bronx. Through the years I've lost track of a lot of those people from my gang, but I know several of them later on in life went from drinking to heroin, and I think a lot of them have passed away. You don't start doing dope in your teens and expect to live to be 72.

GM: *You will be 73 in April. Do you ever think about your mortality? Are you fearful of death?*
AF: Nothing scares me. I just kind of go with the flow. If I entered a different universe and then came back, so be it, I just go with the flow. That's the kind of person I am. Even if I got abducted into a UFO, I would try not to be scared. I really believe that most aliens are good because they're an advanced society, and they probably given up on war because they realized it's a disaster and nobody wins in the long run.

"Yeah, the lyrics for that song talk all about my life growing up in the Bronx. Through the years I've lost track of a lot of those people from my gang, but I know several of them later on in life went from drinking to heroin, and I think a lot of them have passed away. You don't start doing dope in your teens and expect to live to be 72."

— ACE FREHLEY ON THE SONG "*FIGHTIN' FOR LIFE*"

ACE FREHLEY

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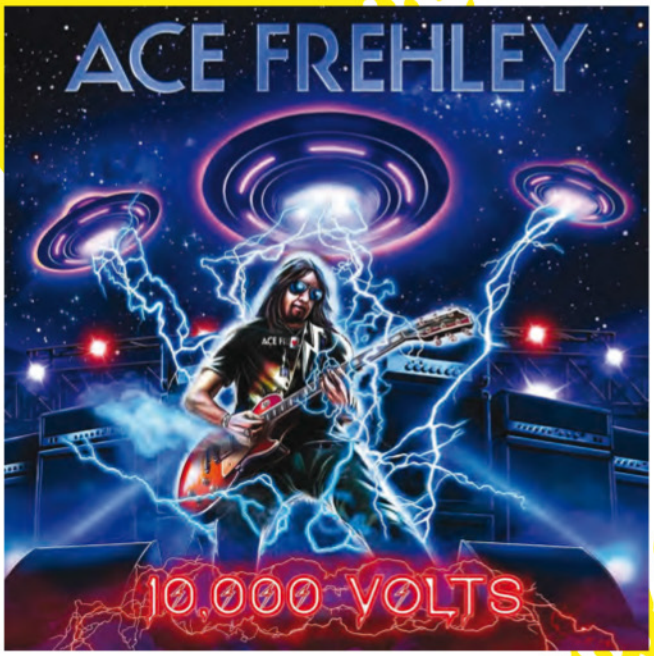

TRACK BY TRACK

BREAKDOWN OF *10,000 VOLTS* WITH CO-PRODUCER/COLLABORATOR **STEVE BROWN**

"10,000 VOLTS"

STEVE BROWN: This record, to me, is quintessential classic Ace Frehley. It's everything that Ace was, let's say back in 1977 and 1978. The heyday of Kiss and what everything Ace is now. To me the song is a modern-day "Shock Me" — it incorporates every part and every element that all of us Kiss fans and Ace Frehley fans love about Ace. It's got an upbeat, great groove. It's kind of got a little bit of a "Firehouse" Kiss thing. Ace said it himself, "'10,000 Volts' is the new 'Shock Me.'" The song has great guitar sounds and great vocals, and of course the lyrics that Ace and I came up with, "she hit me like 10,000 volts" — nothing epitomizes Ace Frehley more than the story of him getting electrocuted in the '70s or him having an electrifying sound.

This song was written by myself, Ace and our co-writer, David Julian, who was integral in coming up with some of the key guitar parts that we used. Ace used his Les Paul on this song as usual, and I believe we used one of the Aurora guitar plug-ins for his guitar solo tone. I used my SBS VS200 on this, and David Julian played some guitars as well. I believe he used a Les Paul. PJ Farley is on bass guitar and Anton Fig on drums. Ace and I did all the vocals. I did all the high harmonies and low-octave vocals. Ace did some of the harmonies as well. Lyrically, it's a song about the thrill of the chase. It's got some gambling references, which is classic Ace. Ace and I had a lot of fun writing these lyrics, which talks about how when Ace met Lara for the first time she hit him like 10,000 volts.

"WALKIN' ON THE MOON"

STEVE BROWN: "Walkin' on the Moon" was the first song that Ace and I collaborated on for the new album. It's very, very special because it's certainly a true collaboration in the sense that I brought in the original idea, which was very much influenced by Jimmy Page.

It's got a Led Zeppelin thing, and I knew Ace would love it. It had a great hook and the line "walking on the moon" somewhere, but it wasn't the title of the song, and it certainly wasn't the hook. That was totally Ace's idea. When he heard it, he immediately said, "Steve, we've got to change this around. 'Walkin' on the Moon' is the title of the song, and we've got to have 'walking on the moon' as part of the chorus." And that's what we did and it completely transformed the song. On the first day we worked on it together, doing vocals and some guitar parts, Ace was just on fire. The vocals that you hear on the final mix of the record are actually the vocals that we cut the first day we recorded together, and that's the power of being able to make records in a home studio. Everything is a keeper. There's no throwaway stuff. There were no demos. Everything we used, everything that I brought to the table on my original Pro Tools session, the guitar is the bass, most of it was used. Jordan Cannata is on drums. He's the drummer in Slaughter, and he was in Tokyo Motor Fist with me. He did a phenomenal job. It's just a really special song. The song originally had no bridge, and Ace really loves bridges in his songs, so he's like, "I've got to come up with a bridge." And I get a call from him; he woke me up at three o'clock in the morning and said he had this idea for a bridge. He went down to the recording studio and recorded guitars and vocals that I was able to chop in, cut and paste into the original tracks that we had been working on. And that's the beauty of digital recording when somebody gets an idea. Ace gets inspired at weird times, like three o'clock in the morning, so it was magic from the beginning. And for guitars, we used Ace's Les Pauls. There's a bunch of acoustics that are overdubbed on top; I believe we used both a Gibson and Guild acoustic that are underneath the electrics so it really, really made it sound extra special. I think this is Ace's best guitar solo and guitar record that he's had in decades, probably since the '78 record. I spent a lot of time with Ace to make sure that each of his solos was very thematic and had a beginning, middle and an end, and something that told a story within a story like Ace used to do with this classic guitar solos in Kiss on songs like "100,000 Years" and "Calling Dr. Love," so that was very important.

Ace Frehley and Steve Brown pose in Ace's home studio.

"COSMIC HEART"

STEVE BROWN: This is an extra special song because lyrically Ace and I wanted to write something a little autobiographical talking about Ace's life. We all know the stories about Ace's past and his problems with drugs and alcohol. This was a story about his survival and the great things that he's seen during life. Ace came up with some great lyric lines in this song. And guitar-wise, it's one of the coolest guitar tracks on the record. For the intro riff, we used an octave pedal, and we doubled and tripled the guitar riff with different guitars — Les Pauls, Stratocasters and my SBS VS 200 and MS 260 model guitars — and it really gave it this monster, monster sound. Ace was really, really into doing that. I can't stress enough how exciting it was to see Ace act like a teenager. Me and him were both laughing, going, "How cool is this? This sounds amazing." The fans are going to love it. Very inspiring to see that from a 72-year-old man who's been making records for 50 years, so that was very cool. "Cosmic Heart" has a menacing vibe to it. We used the DigiTech FreqOut pedal on this, which you can hear all through kind of mimicking some synth sounds and adding some atmosphere to it. Ace and I both love the guitar solo. He threw in all these classic Ace Frehley licks that we all love. This one was definitely one of the more spontaneous solos. We didn't have to really sit there and punch in. I told him, "Man, just let it rip." We did about four or five passes, and I think he nailed it on the fourth one. We got the vibe that we were looking for. "Cosmic Heart" is definitely one of our favorite tracks off the record and a guitar highlight for sure.

"CHERRY MEDICINE"

STEVE BROWN: "Cherry Medicine" is the undisputed unanimous X-factor song on the record. It's the one that everybody at the record company and some of our closest friends and family have chosen as the ultimate favorite and probably one of the most unique songs on the album. Ace and I wanted to write a song that had the "2,000 Man" vibe starting out with the crunchy guitar. It's just a great Les Paul into a Marshall sound, and that sets the tone off. Lyrically, it's about cherry medicine, that thing, that person, your loved one that makes you feel great. Ace and I thought it would be cool to give a little nod to "Shock Me" and put in the lyric, "I love you when you're in your black leather," so all the Kiss fans will rejoice and enjoy that.

Guitar-wise, there's a ton of different guitar parts going on. I played bass, Anton Fig is on drums, and Ace and I do all the background vocals. One of the cool guitar things we did was playing in octaves that

GIOVANNA MELCHIORRE

Paul Stanley and Ace were famous for with Kiss. Ace would play the high octave of the power chords, and I was playing the low chunky parts, which really made the guitars sound huge. With Ace's guitar solo, that solo section sounds like it could have been taken off *Alive!* or *Dressed to Kill*. It's got that vintage sound to it. It's 100 percent an Ace Frehley song, a melodic pop rocker, but it's also very current. It's also very modern rock. People have said, "Wow, it sounds like Weezer" or "Wow, it sounds a little like Green Day" or "Wow it sounds like it's got a Cheap Trick thing to it or Foo Fighters." That's really cool because that was one of my goals co-producing this record. I said, "We need to make a modern rock record that is reminiscent of everything you've done in the past, but bringing it up to the future." "Cherry Medicine" is the X-factor song on the record that ties all the songs together.

"BACK INTO MY ARMS AGAIN"

STEVE BROWN: "Back Into My Arms" is a song that Ace wrote with a guy named Arthur Stead. Interesting story about this. Ace and I were working in my studio; we were working on the vocals to "Cherry Medicine" when we were looking at something on YouTube and this icon came up and it said, Ace Frehley "Back Into My Arms Again," and it had a picture him from the *Unmasked* tour. I asked Ace, "Is this a leftover from *Unmasked*?" He said, "No, it's a song I wrote with Arthur Stead." We put it on, and as soon as it got to the chorus, I looked at Ace, and Ace looked at me and we both said, "We've got to record this for the new record." This song is phenomenal; it's got an '80s power-ballad vibe to it, which is great. Ace did some beautiful acoustic guitar work in it, along with myself and my co-writer on "10,000 Volts" and "Cosmic Heart," David Julian, who helped put the song together, adding different guitar and keyboard tracks. David actually played keyboards on it, but Ace and I used our Taylor 12-string and Guild six string; I believe we used a couple of Gibsons as well. We loaded the acoustics up, and Ace used his blue sparkle Les Paul for the solo. Ace and I spent a little bit of time on the solo really trying to find the right feel, and we added a little bit of the double and triple tracking to give it that sort of '70s vibe.

I remember Ace saying how much he loved Eddie Money's guitar player, Jimmy Lyon, and we kind of went for that sort of vibe. It's a classic, beautiful Ace Frehley solo. I believe we recorded this with one of his old Marshall heads into a single Fender cabinet with a Jensen speaker in it. Again, the song is a beautiful power ballad that's got some balls to it, and Ace and I did some beautiful vocal harmony work on it. I think the Ace Frehley faithful fans are going to rejoice that we finally recorded this song 30-plus years later.

"FIGHTIN' FOR LIFE"

STEVE BROWN: "Fightin' for Life" was the second song that Ace and I worked on. I had the basic idea, the music, and I came up with the chords and the riff. I was going for an old-school Kiss vibe, and it definitely has a little bit of a "Rip It Out" feel to it. Ace felt it was very important to talk about his tough upbringing in the Bronx being in gangs and his musical journey. You're fighting for life growing up on the streets in the Bronx and being in the music business. The message behind the song is autobiographical. It's one of the standout tracks on the record and one old-school Kiss fans are really going to love. Ace played a ripping solo on it; classic Ace Frehley doesn't get much better than that. He used his black Les Paul, the one from the '79 *Dynasty* tour, and I believe we used the Aurora Rhino plug-in for this. It was definitely a plug-in that he used on his solo section. I used a variety of amps as well, and I'm playing bass guitar on it as well. I used my EVH 5150 on a lot of the rhythms along with my HeadRush pedal board that we used. I think Ace might even use that on the guitar solo. But it's a great song, and it features Anton Fig on drums. My direction to Anton was to give it a "Rip It Out" feel. So there's definitely some influence of Anton Fig re-creating some of his bits and grooves from that Ace Frehley classic song. For a lot of the people who've heard the record, they think "Fightin' for Life" is one of the best songs on the album. I get it because it's definitely one of the one that's most reminiscent of vintage Kiss.

Guitarist Steve Brown delivers a guitar solo during the Cathouse Festival at Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre on August 15, 2015, in Irvine, California.

SCOTT DUDELSON/GETTY IMAGES

"BLINDED"

STEVE BROWN: This is a classic Ace Frehley Kiss-inspired song. I think it could have been a leftover from *Rock and Roll Over*, or even *Love Gun*. Like "Fightin' for Life," it features classic Ace Frehley riffs in it. Ace and I came up with some incredible old-school rock riffs, very reminiscent of Kiss and of Ace's stuff. One interesting thing about "Blinded" was that Ace went in a totally different lyrical direction than originally planned. When I brought in the idea for

Steve Brown performs with Trixter on April 24, 1991, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"Blinded," it was a song about anxiety blinded by panic, and Ace completely changed the lyrics around, which I thought was brilliant. He wanted to write a song about the perils of artificial intelligence and it was really unique, and he was very passionate about it. So, we rewrote all the lyrics and came up with this cool story about how AI could potentially be the downfall for us. It was really all Ace's idea, and I love it. He also came up with the idea to put an a cappella vocal intro. He said, "We should do this, and it'll be like Kansas and Bon Jovi," and I thought that was super cool. I said, "Yeah man, it'll be like 'You Give Love a Bad Name' by Bon Jovi'," and Ace goes, "I love that song." You can also definitely hear a little bit of a "Calling Dr. Love" riff thing in there. I added the cowbell for all the Kiss fans to give it that little nod to the "Calling Dr. Love" riff. "Blinded" features Ace's trademark "dinosaur bend" before the solo. It's also featured on the *Alive II* "Shock Me" guitar solo. Ace told me Gene [Simmons] coined that phrase. "Blinded" is definitely one of the more powerful rock songs on the record, and it's a unique lyrical subject that was classic Ace Frehley.

"CONSTANTLY CUTE"

STEVE BROWN: The title of the song came about from Ace's fiancé, Lara, who was talking about Ace and just saying how he's constantly cute. He called me and said, "Steve, I got a great title for a song, 'Constantly Cute.' We got to come up with something cool." I wanted to do something with a double-time feel like "I Want You to Want Me" or "Ballroom Blitz." I worked up a track with the music and chords, but Ace didn't like the tempo, and so we completely reworked the song. Ace had a definitive groove he wanted. It was the one and only time on the record that he pulled out his old drum machine and actually programmed the beat that he wanted to hear on the song, which is kind of what we have in the finished product with Joey Cassata on drums.

It was very cool watching Ace get so creative with the drum machine. This song had a lot of twists and turns. We did a lot of arrangement changes to get the right parts together. I love the way the intro has the harmony guitar parts. Ace always loved Thin Lizzy. So the twin-guitar thing that Ace and I play in the intro was a nod to Thin Lizzy. The song also has a very cool bridge section. I said, "Man, we got to do something like Hendrix," and Ace loved that because Ace was so influenced by Jimi Hendrix. He actually also roadied for a day for Jimi Hendrix. But the whole breakdown section in the bridge before the guitar solo was very much inspired by Hendrix — "Foxy Lady," "Purple Haze" kind of playing. We added some effects to his voice. I love the solo on this. This one is unique because Ace worked out a completely different solo beforehand that we were happy with. He played some really different styled stuff, very country influenced, almost Southern rock Skynyrd style. He did a lot of double-stop things, and we actually probably have to release that version. The solo is so cool and so unique, I think the fans would love it. But I remember when we were getting close to finishing, Ace looked at me and said, "I want to try to put a different guitar solo down," and he grabbed his blue Les Paul that we used a lot on this record, and he just plugged into the Marshall and he ripped out pretty much the guitar solo that you hear. It was pretty much one take, and I think we patched up a few other things. But it was very much a spontaneous solo. Lara Cove, Ace's fiancé, sings background vocals along with me. Lara and I did the high background parts and layered them. "Constantly Cute" is one of my favorites of the record. I played bass on it, and Joey Cassata is on drums.

LISA LAKE/GETTY IMAGES

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>
> — STEVE BROWN

"LIFE OF A STRANGER"

STEVE BROWN: "Life of a Stranger" is the one cover song on the record. Every one of Ace's solo records has a cover tune or two on it. This was one of the songs that he chose. He actually chose a couple, and I was like, "I don't hear it, and don't think it's a good idea." Ace watched the movie *The Transporter*, and this girl Nadia sang it and it was more of a pop style. Ace was very excited about it. I listened to the song, and immediately was interested, and I knew that we could do something great. I heard a big kind of a Led Zeppelin "Stairway to Heaven" production, which is what we wound up doing, adding keyboards and piano and lots of layers and strings. I told Ace, "Let's do something that you've never done." It definitely has an old-school vibe, Pink Floyd *Dark Side of the Moon, Led Zeppelin IV* classic rock sound. I think it's one of Ace's most unique cover songs that he's ever done. "Life of a Stranger" is such a unique song. It has three modulations in it, which is something that Ace has never had in any of his songs in his whole 50-year recording career. I thought we could really do something sort of epic and classic sounding and timeless with that cool guitar intro that Ace came up with. Those classic Ace licks really set the tone, and it just has that magical, ethereal sound to it. It's such a great song, and Ace knocked it out of the park with his vocal. I added the high harmonies on it. This is a very unique song because it's the only song on the record that Ace played bass on. He played real cool bass guitar work, did some real nice bass lines on this. He likes to keep his bass guitar parts simple, which I thought fit for the song. There was so much going on with the piano, the Hammond B3 organ that my friend Eric Ragno put in.

"UP IN THE SKY"

STEVE BROWN: "Up In the Sky" was one of the songs that Ace started working on during the pandemic. He was working on that with his other engineer. I heard the song and heard a lot of potential. We reworked all the lyrics. It was originally called "Fact or Fiction," and we changed the title. I came up with a chorus for "Up In the Sky," and we rewrote some lyrics, and this, to me, sounds very reminiscent of a '70s Ace Frehley song. I tried to change the guitar parts for Ace, and we added some Stratocaster in there, kind of giving it the "New York Groove" feel with the chugging rhythm. I just love the way this song came out. I really love Ace's solo. I believe he recorded this with his black Les Paul custom into his Marshall. You can hear a big room sound, and it's just classic Ace. That's a fun one. "Up In the Sky" also features Ace using the DigiTech FreqOut pedal. You can hear the sustain after the first chorus. I told him, "Let's go for a 'King of the Night Time World' vibe with the sustained note out of the first chorus into the second verse." That really gives it that classic Ace Frehley Kiss sound.

"STRATOSPHERE"

STEVE BROWN: "Stratosphere" is the lone instrumental on the record. It's an idea that I came up with originally and brought to Ace, and he loved it. We used all of the guitars and, what I like to call, the kitchen sink. We used a ton of acoustics, a bunch of electrics. We used Ace's Taylor 12-string, a Guild 12-string. We used a Taylor six string and a Takamine classical guitar. Ace used his Fender Stratocaster, which is unique. He played the guitar solo with his blue Les Paul Standard. Ace listened to what I came up with, and his original reaction was it needs more guitars. So in the intro, Ace added the second and third arpeggio guitar parts, which gives it that "Rock Bottom," "Fractured Mirror" feel.

We all know how all of Ace's solo albums have instrumentals on it, and we used a lot of different effects and layering. We doubled some guitar parts on Ace's lead lines. We also used the DigiTech FreqOut pedal for sustained parts, which you can hear a lot in the second verse. This song has a classic vibe, but yet it's modern. There are some keyboards that give it sort of a modern sound and a modern feel. I just love the fact that it's got the tripled arpeggio guitars in it, and it really sounds great. I used my SBS VS200 on some of the clean parts into the Aurora DSP Rhino guitar plug-in for some clean sounds. For me, *10,000 Volts* is a career-defining record, which encapsulates his 50-year recording and musical journey. It has elements from the '60s when he was a kid, '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s and where we are right now. I'm proud of the fact that this record has something for every Ace Frehley and Kiss fan could ever dream of. Ace and I are both so proud of it.

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A CLOSE LOOK AT
ACE FREHLEY'S
1978 SOLO ALBUM

CLASSIC SOLO SPACE ACE

BY KEN SHARP

In 1978, Kiss were arguably one of the biggest bands on the planet. A slate of platinum albums — *Destroyer, Rock and Roll Over, Love Gun, Alive II* and *Double Platinum* — sold-out tours in the U.S. and Japan, and millions of dollars generated by the sales of Kiss merchandise (from board games to dolls) solidified their status as reigning rock gods. They were enlisted by cartoon titans Hanna-Barbera for their own movie, *Kiss Meets the Phantom of the Park*, and it seemed the perfect vehicle to their fervent global following. Yet all was not rosy in Kiss world.

Ace Frehley of Kiss in San Francisco, 1979.

STEVE JENNINGS/WIREIMAGE

During the filming, interpersonal band tensions became toxic, precipitating rumors of an impending breakup. To appease warring factions and defuse the growing disharmony, Kiss manager Bill Aucoin opted for the band members to record their own solo album; a solo album clause was already in place within their Casablanca Records contract. On September 18, 1978, in an unprecedented move, four solo albums by Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley and Peter Criss were released on the same day. The dark horse of Kiss, Frehley surprised industry wags and fans with a spectacular solo effort; the Russ Ballard-penned "New York Groove" became the only major hit from the album. Frehley's eponymous long player is universally cited as a watermark in The Spaceman's recording career.

Forty-six years after its release, join us for a conversation with Frehley, producer Eddie Kramer, drummer Anton Fig and Kiss creative director Dennis Woloch detailing the back story of a classic album in Kisstory.

GOLDMINE: *When broached with the idea of each member of Kiss doing a solo album, what was your reaction?*
ACE FREHLEY: I think the solo albums was a good idea. We needed a break from each other. We had been on the road or in the studio continuously. We needed to get away from each other.

GM: *When you found out you were going to do a solo album, did you have a lot of songs in the can or songs you held back from Kiss?*
AF: There were a couple of songs that I didn't present the band with while working on *Love Gun*. Yeah, I remember holding back a couple of songs for that record, and I didn't present them to the band. Every time we would do a Kiss record, everybody would do demos and present songs so Paul, Gene and Peter could hear them as well as the producer, and then we'd decide which were the 10 or 11 best songs for the record. I held back a couple of songs that I thought were really good, and I held them back for my solo record. I knew that was coming.

GM: *Knowing you'd have more time to spend on songs for your solo album than a KISS album, which were routinely knocked out quickly, did that enter into your thinking?*
AF: No, I don't think the time factor entered into any of the decisions. We worked quickly. Paul and Gene were workaholics, and I was a little more laid back. But I wasn't concerned with the time factor. I just wanted to have the best nine songs of the record.

GM: *A song cut for the solo album, "All for Nothing," exists in collector circles; why didn't it make the cut?*
AF: To be honest, it gets boring. I listened to it recently and I remember some of the lyrics; I wrote that with Larry Kelly, my lead singer from my band, the Magic People. Listening to it now, it's not as good as the other songs on my 1978 solo record. (Sings the chorus) "All for Nothing." The lyrics weren't that good either, so that song just didn't do it for me.

GM: *What were the songs on the record that you brought to the table that you were especially excited about?*
AF: Well, "Rip It Out" was one. I knew that was a really good one.

GM: *Why did you choose to record the album at the Colgate mansion instead of a recording studio? What was its appeal?*
AF: *Rock and Roll Over* was recorded at the Nanuet Star Theatre, which wasn't a recording studio. I remember we recorded on the stage. Our producer, Eddie Kramer, built a makeshift control room in one of the rooms there. That's what I loved about Eddie. He was willing to take chances. There was a cool vibe in that. I had seen Frank Sinatra there. It was a mob joint, and they ended up tearing it down. I remember going there with my father-in-law and my brother-in-law to see a couple of fights there. It was before the internet and pay-per-view.

GM: *You saw Sinatra there?*
AF: Yeah, I saw Sinatra and I met Sinatra there. My road manager Billy Miller, working for Kiss, worked for Sinatra for a period of time, so he knew Sinatra. I remember him bringing me and my wife, Jeanette, backstage. I just got a handshake and a "Hey, how you doing?" And I just said, "Hey, great show!" It was quick, but to meet Sinatra was a very spiritual f**king deal.

GM: *Let's talk about how Eddie Kramer captured the sonics inside the Colgate mansion.*
AF: When you walked into the mansion, there's a huge foyer, and then you could go up to the second floor using either the left staircase or the right staircase. So what Eddie did, besides close-miking the drums like you always do, he put microphones up on the second floor facing down to get the natural reverb. At that point in time they hadn't invented really cool digital reverbs that we have today and all the toys you get with Pro Tools, and we were going for natural echoes, natural reverb sounds. As for amps, we used Marshalls of course; we may have used a Fender Bassman that had four tens in it, and a Fender Harvard amp, too. I remember the bathroom was all marble, so I set up a Marshall stack in there, and that's where I got the bell sound at the end of "Fractured Mirror." It fades out and then it kind of fades back, and you get this bell kind of sound. I recorded that in the bathroom with a Marshall and a double-neck guitar. And what I did was I played the figure but turned off the 12-string pickups and only used the pickups on the six-string, even though I wasn't playing on that neck. But the Marshall was on 10, so it was picking up the resonance from the body, and that's how I got that interesting bell sound because it's harmonics and stuff coming off the guitar. I didn't use the pickups on the 12-string, even though I was playing the figure on the 12-string. That's something I invented. It was just an idea I came up with, and it worked great.

GM: *So, Eddie Kramer was your first and only choice as co-producer for the solo album?*
AF: Absolutely. What I loved about Eddie, besides the fact that he was a great producer and knew how to get great sounds, he was willing to try things where a lot of producers would just say, "That's not going to work." He was open to crazy ideas and interesting miking techniques. For example, when we recorded the acoustics in the library, which was all wood, it was one of the first rooms to have indirect lighting. It had this big molding, and the lighting was hidden behind the molding, and it lit the ceiling, and the light bounced off the ceiling. Today it's done all the time. It's called indi-

rect lighting, and I actually have it in my control room. That mansion really had some unique stuff in it and rooms which inspired me. I don't know if there were ghosts in there, but it was pretty cool. There was a carriage house that had stalls that they kept horses in, and we ended up using the stall and put Marshalls in it. It was all wood, so we'd close-mic it, and then we'd mic it further away and get that natural echo bounce.

GM: *Did you know pretty early while the record was coming together that, "Hey, this is special, this is going to be strong"?*
AF: Halfway through the record, I'd listen to rough mixes and I'd look at Anton [Fig] and I go, "This is going to be a great record," and he agreed, and so did Eddie. We only had the Colgate mansion for a certain amount of days, and then we had to do overdubs in Plaza Sound, this recording studio that was in Radio City Music Hall, which was really neat. It was a great big room and a small control room with [an] API board. We recorded "New York Groove" there and a few others.

GM: *You used an ARP synthesizer on the album.*
AF: Yeah, I used that in that studio. I was always into anything that was new. I wanted to try it to expand my genre of sounds that I could create with a guitar, and that was one of the first really cool synthesizers. There's an advantage to the space of the recording room because it was gigantic. And back then in those days, people didn't realize that a control room should be big because most guitar players will put the Marshall head in the control room and have the speakers in the recording room. You want a large control room. So, number one, if you have executives that want to come in and listen to some rough mixes, there's a nice couch in the back. But the control room in that studio was really small, but we made it work. It was just me, Anton, Eddie and Rob Freeman, our engineer. Rob was good, and he had some interesting ideas. I remember when we were recording with the ARP synthesizer, I'd watch him move something on the thing, and I said, "Hey, don't move anything without checking with me first," and I'd see him kind of try to sneak and change the setting a little thinking I didn't see it. (laughs) We had fun doing the record. We knew it was going to be a special album, and the songs were turning out really well. There's a lot of love in that record, a lot of love and a lot of determination on my part and everyone else involved.

GM: *Besides guitar, you play bass on six of the nine songs. Will Lee plays bass on three tracks.*
AF: I'll never forget it. He walked in with a cute chick and he put brand-new strings on his bass really quickly. He was playing a Telecaster bass, if I remember correctly, and snorted a couple of lines and *boom*, he played some great bass on those songs. I like playing bass; bass is fun. Sometimes I'll pick up a bass guitar and sit down and start fooling around, and I'll write a riff that really sounds good on a regular guitar on a bass because you think differently when you're playing a bass than you do with a guitar. I've written riff songs on a bass and then transferred it to the Les Paul. It just puts your head in a different place, and sometimes you come up with things playing on a bass guitar that you wouldn't on an electric guitar.

GM: *While working on the album, was there a sense of competition with Paul, Gene and Peter —a little bit of a "I'm gonna show 'em what I can do" mentality?*
AF: I remember we were all sitting down at a big table, and there were management, business managers, attorneys and the four band members. We were discussing the solo album projects and who was doing what where. Towards the end of the meeting, I remember Paul and Gene made this comment to me, "Ace, if you need any help on your album, don't hesitate to give us a call." I kind of felt they said that in front of everybody to make it sound like they're these nice guys that would be willing to extend their help to me. But it also came off to me like they were saying I might need help because maybe I'm not the greatest songwriter in the band. That kind of left a bad taste in my mouth. So yeah, there was that feeling of, *I'm going to show you guys I don't need your help*. And the success of the album proved that, and it also proved to me that I was more creative away from them than with them.

GM: *Having a hit single off of your solo album with "New York Groove," did that plant a seed for you to leave the group, or did it give you more confidence in yourself as an artist, songwriter and record maker?*
AF: Well, after the success of my solo album, the writing was on the wall for me. I realized I was more creative away from those guys because they're control freaks, and they like things the way they like them. I don't like recording the way they record because sometimes they would do 20-25 takes and I'd say, "We're beating a dead horse here on this song." That happened with Bob Ezrin working on the *Destroyer* album. When I'm recording, if I'm working with a drummer, it's just me and the drummer. If I can't get it in three, four, five takes at the most, I'll just say, "Let's try something else" because after five, six, seven takes, you start losing spontaneity and you start getting bored, actually. Doing 25 takes of a song is completely absurd. I don't remember what song it was, but it was one of the songs on *Destroyer*, I said to Paul and Gene, "Listen, why don't we just put this to sleep right now and try something else? We can come into the studio tomorrow and try it again." And lo and behold, we came into the studio the next day and did it in two or three takes because we knew the song, we knew what the pitfalls were and the mistakes we made, and we knocked it off and it had spontaneity. Paul and Gene have a certain work ethic that I don't have. For example, when Gene was living in Manhattan in his penthouse, he told me he'd go into his closet, he had a little amp and a recorder set up there, and he'd write a song every day. And I'd say, "Why do you force yourself to write a song every day?" He goes, "That's just my work ethic." I go, "I can't work that way, Gene. I can only write a song when I feel inspired." So for example, I'll go three weeks without writing a song and then the following the weekend, something would inspire me and I'll end up writing two or three songs in a weekend. Out of 365 songs that Gene wrote in one year while he was living there, there was probably only a half a dozen songs that we used.

Frehley playing his Gibson Les Paul guitar during cover sessions for the *Alive!* album.

FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS

ART DIRECTOR DENNIS WOLOCH ON KISS SOLO ALBUMS

Starting with Kiss' 1974 self-titled debut, Dennis Woloch served as the art director overseeing all of the band's album releases, tour books, advertising and more. We recently spoke with Woloch about his key role commissioning the striking artwork on the four Kiss solo albums from 1978.

GOLDMINE: *How did you come to enlist painter Eraldo Carugati to do the paintings for the Kiss solo albums?*

DENNIS WOLOCH: When the solo-album project came along, it was probably the most important Kiss project that I had done up to that point. I had done a lot of covers and tour books and related advertising, but Gene, Ace, Paul and Peter coming out with their solo album on the same date was a big deal. Yes, it was a marketing gimmick, but it was still important. Given it was the most important project I'd done for Kiss up to that time, I was feeling the pressure to do something memorable. Vinny [DiGerlando], my co-worker, who recently passed away, was helping me look for an artist, and he pointed out Eraldo Carugati. I'd never heard of him before. Vinny liked him because his work had magical realism. I called Eraldo and talked over the project. I sent him reference photos, and he did some layouts.

About three quarters of the way done, I had to go to Chicago to oversee the job. He was doing the backlighting on their hair the way it would have looked if they were photographed in a photography studio. They'd put a white light back there or maybe a yellow light to have the edges pick up that color. I saw him beginning to paint that, and I said, "Wait, stop!" I said, "Eraldo, each one of these guys has their own specific color." I said, "Make Ace blue for space, make Gene red for blood, Peter would be green for the jungle cat..." And I didn't know what the hell to do for Paul, to tell you the truth because I didn't know what Paul was. I mean, what's a Starchild? We wound up using purple for Paul which evokes passion. So those color schemes popped into my head while I was standing behind Eraldo, and thank God I did that, because that's one of the better parts of those portraits, that each guy had their own individual color on those solo albums. They were just beautiful portraits. You'd just stare and marvel at them. It's one of my greatest achievements with Kiss. I really wanted to make it timeless and wanted it to hold up over all these years.

Kiss guitarist Ace Frehley brushes his hair and gets his make-up ready while in the Kiss offices. On the wall hangs several gold and platinum records.

LYNN GOLDSMITH/CORBIS/VCG VIA GETTY IMAGES

EDDIE KRAMER
ON ACE FREHLEY'S 1978 SOLO ALBUM
BY KEN SHARP

GOLDMINE: *How did you come to produce Ace's 1978 solo album?*
EDDIE KRAMER: From my days of working on Kiss' first demo in the spring of 1973, Ace and I formed a bond. I don't know why, but some personalities click, and we clicked. In the '70s, I produced the Kiss albums, *Alive!, Rock and Roll Over, Love Gun* and *Alive II*. After that, we get up to the point where guys want to do their own solo albums now. Gene does his, Paul does his, Peter does his and I get Ace. That's great. Ok, so what are we going to do? We're thinking about songs and how to make a sound. Ace loves songs and he likes commerciality and so do I. He has a real good rock and roll sense. We just enjoyed each other's company in terms of the creative process. I told him, "We're going to do this album like I've done Zeppelin and folks like that." I said, "We've got to find a mansion." So I found this mansion up in Connecticut, the Colgate mansion. A crazy guy owned the place. That place was haunted, but damn, what a sound! I think we used the Record Plant truck, if I'm not mistaken, and had the best time. At Colgate it was just the three of us: me, Ace and Anton Fig who played drums. When we moved the sessions to Plaza Sound, Will Lee played bass on a few tracks. I mean, it doesn't get much better than that with Anton's drumming, which was so stupendous, and Will having such a great feel. Those guys were killing it with Ace. By the way, I still have all those photographs from that session up in the Colgate mansion where Ace is singing, and he didn't want me to take pictures of him because he had to hide his face. But the two scenes that stick out in my mind is when you walk into the mansion and there's this massive staircase that must be 10 feet wide or something, and it just goes up to a massive landing and then splits off into two other sets of stairs. And on that landing I brought out Anton's snare drum and I hit that and said, "That's it. This is where you're going to play." So he was in this commanding position with a big window behind him. and I had mics down the stairs and then in the alcoves, too. His drum sound was just phenomenal. Then the other scene was on the ground floor to the left, there was this massive room. I think was a dining room at one point. and it had some drapes in it, but we put all the amps in there. Christ, these amps sounded so good in there. We had this wall of amps that we could pick from. That's the other thing, Ace and I are into tone; we love guitar tones. We love experimenting. "Oh, let's use this amp with that hooked up over there and we can get this sound and then do some stereo stuff." We love to experiment and do stuff that's inventive, which would then inspire not only the sound, but it also inspired Ace's playing. And he played his ass off on this record. It's beautifully constructed and it showed in the final analysis. Once we had it almost finished, we went to Plaza Sound to do a few more tracks, overdubs, vocals and some more stuff. His solo album demonstrated that Ace was a solid player and reliable. He wasn't bummed out or bombed. I mean, he drank a bit, but he wasn't out of his mind. He was focused on what he had to do and he had just such a great sense of what is right and what is wrong. He listened to me and he listened to Anton. His ears were open. He wasn't fighting me.

GM: *What were your goals for Ace's album when you went into it, and how closely did you think you met those goals or exceeded your expectations for what you could achieve?*
EK: Oh, I would say the latter. It definitely exceeded my expectations because of how he was feeling in charge of his creativity. He'd go, "Hey Curly, I got this idea." I'd say, "OK fine, that's cool, Ace, but can you do that in the bridge? Can you play this line here a little bit differently?" And he would listen and be a creative partner, and that's what it took. I think he exceeded all my expectations. His playing on that record is just spectacular.

GM: *Did you sense Ace had something to prove to Gene, Paul and Peter with his album?*
EK: Yes and I think it definitely upped his game. I think it gave him confidence in his ability to play. I kept saying, "Ace, you're a f**king good guitar player," and I think he appreciated that given the fact that someone like myself had worked with artists like Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin. It was inspiring for him. We did a lot of experimentation with sounds. He heard something in his head and he'd say, "Can you get me that?" And I got the sounds for him. And if he was hearing it in his head

Record producer Eddie Kramer sits behond the mixing desk at Manhattan Center Studio, New York.

DAVID CORIO/REDFERNS

and I was able to take that, interpret it and make it a reality, that was a huge thing. In terms of sounds, there was nothing left on the table. We tried everything. If it could give us a unique way of shaping the song or making a statement about that song or that gave it an individual approach, we'd do it. I love living on the edge like that, and he loved that.

GM: *At what point working on the record as it's coming together did you realize that this is going to be a great album? Did that realization happen early in the process?*
EK: I think we were so wrapped up in doing it and so excited about it. I think that realization came a little later. Once I'd mixed it, I thought, *Wow, we stand a very good chance of doing extremely well with this record.*

GM: *You were responsible for getting Ace to record "New York Groove," which became the biggest hit off of the four Kiss solo albums.*
EK: I heard "New York Groove," and I said, "You know, Ace, this is a cool song. We've gotta try it. Ace, come on, let's give it a go." I can't remember how I persuaded him, but I know I nagged him. I'm a bit of a nagger. (laughs) You know, that's the job of a producer. Your instinct kicks in and you have a feeling that this will work, and it may be literally outside the box and a little odd. That single is still very much alive and popular. I mean, come on, it's played at Yankee Stadium.

GM: *Was it your idea to bring in the female singers?*
EK: Yes, it did come to my mind that we needed pro singers. We could have asked the guys in Kiss do it, but Ace would never have gone for it, and it would have been the wrong vibe. In all the years I'd been working the studio in New York, I knew who to call. We brought in these great female singers and they nailed it. They came in and said, "Oh, you want that part?" And you get what you pay for. You get great blends, you get imagination. "Oh man, we could do this harmony." To enhance Anton's drums, we had Ace and a few other guys stamp on cardboard boxes. That was cool for Ace's record because it gave it a neat sound. It all goes back to that word, experimentation. Let's push the boundaries. When that was incorporated into the song, it becomes enmeshed in the flavor.

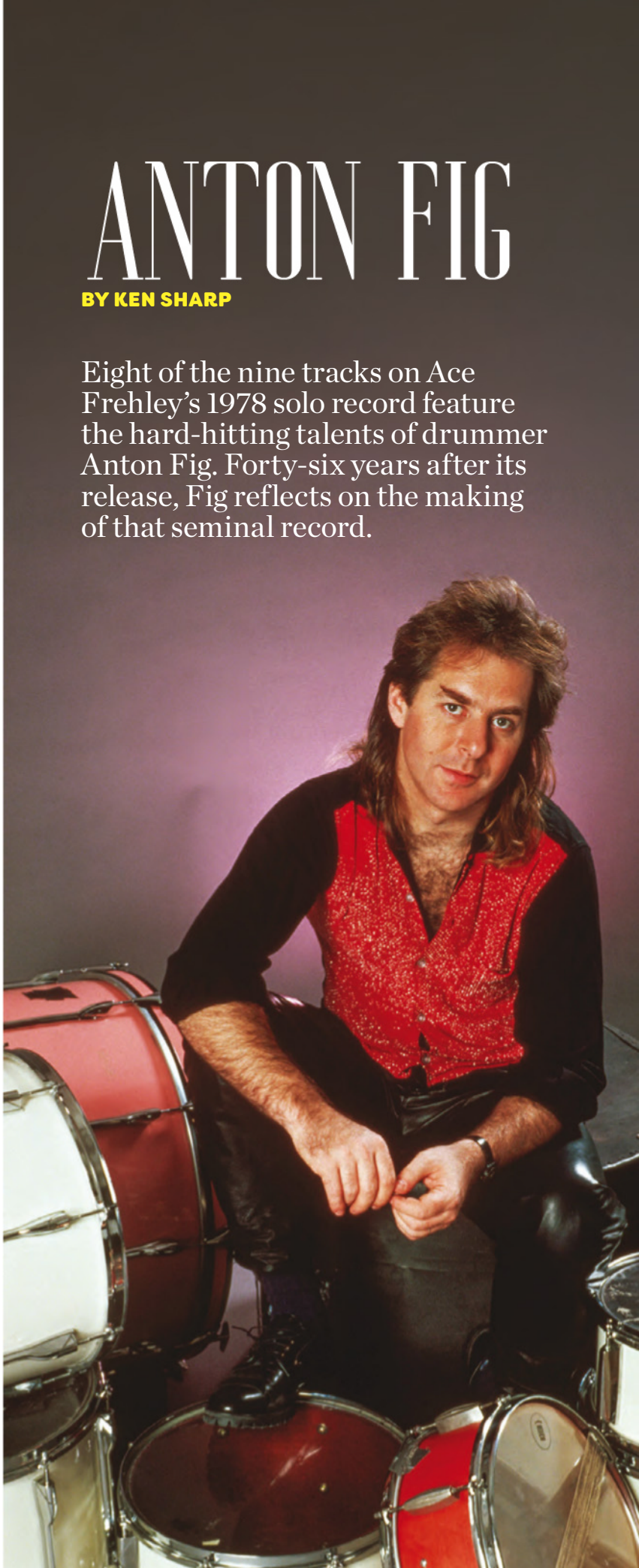
GM: *There couldn't have been a more perfect drummer on this album than Anton Fig.*
EK: First of all, he's a South African buddy. I just loved his attack and the fact that he could hit so bloody hard. He reminded me of Bonham in some ways. He had his own thing. He had the dynamic abilities and that hard-hitting foot, and the way he just felt the vibe of a track and did these spectacular fills. He was the perfect fit for this record.

GM: *What makes Ace's 1978 solo album a watermark moment in his career?*
EK: It's fun, it's got great songs, great playing, and it has a unique emotional connection. The feeling that he put into this will be there forever. I mean, he connects with his audience and his playing on it far outstripped what he'd done in Kiss because it was fairly unique. The success of his album gave him confidence and the others guys in Kiss respected him more. That's what he needed, was respect. You can't live without respect.

ANTON FIG

BY KEN SHARP

Eight of the nine tracks on Ace Frehley's 1978 solo record feature the hard-hitting talents of drummer Anton Fig. Forty-six years after its release, Fig reflects on the making of that seminal record.



EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS

GOLDMINE: *Ace's 1978 solo album is always pointed to as the watermark of his career; what makes it a classic album?*
ANTON FIG: I didn't really know Ace before working with him on that album, and I also didn't really know much about Kiss either. Kiss was just like an ad on the side of a bus in New York. I knew that they were a huge band, and so when I went up and played with Ace, I knew that I was playing with a big rock star. I didn't know that he had something to prove with the record with the other guys in Kiss. To me, it was a very heartfelt record. It was just the two of us doing all the basic tracks, and then he did some overdubs. It was very innocent in a way. Not that he's not worldly, but he was very direct: This is what I want to do and this is what I want to play, and this is me, and this is how I express myself. It wasn't contrived at all. We were in the Colgate mansion with a remote truck outside, and I was set up on the landing of the stairwell. Ace was sitting next to me, and his amps were in the dining room or down the stairs and down the hall. Most of the record was just the two of us playing together.

GM: *Were you impressed with the material?*
ANTON: Yeah, I loved it, and I still love it today. It's one of my absolute favorite records and one of the ones that I'm most proud of ever doing, and I've recorded a ton of records.

GM: *Beyond enjoying a tight musical camaraderie and chemistry, you forged a deep lifelong friendship with him.*
ANTON: I really do love that solo record a lot. I really enjoyed playing with him, and I really enjoyed hanging out with him. We just got on and became friends quite quickly, and that friendship has endured, even though there have been periods of time when we haven't connected at all. I mean, recently we've started to again with this new record, which I played on. I went over to his place, and it just felt like I'm hanging out with Ace again. It felt exactly the same.

GM: *What do you remember about the '78 sessions at the Colgate mansion; was it a combination of working hard and playing hard?*
ANTON: Yeah, this whole world of a rock-star record was all new to me. I'd done sessions in New York, but his was one of the earlier sessions that I did. It was a whole new world to me. I've always been driven by the music, so if I was down there to play, the most important thing to me was to get the music right. When we played, that's exactly what we did, and at night we had fun. We had a lot of laughs. Ace likes to laugh and have fun, but when we were working, we were working hard. I've always tried to get the songs as quickly as possible. The record took 10 days for the basic tracks. It was like a whirlwind for me. I was staying up there, recording all day and going out at night sometimes.

GM: *You co-wrote "Wiped-Out."*
ANTON: Yeah, that's right. Ace was playing the chorus riff, and I started to play drums to it. I started to play it one way, and then I flipped and I played another way, which implied a different kind of time signature. It went from a straight-eight thing into a shuffle thing, and his riff stayed exactly the same. He went, "That's really cool." He came up wih the chords and we put a track together, and then he said, "Well, if you can write some words on this, I'll give you 50/50 credit." So I went home and I wrote the words, and that became the song. Ace might have changed one or two words here or there. The whole rhythmic thing when he sings, "I was wiped out," it sort of goes into a weird time thing, but his guitar part stays the same throughout. He doesn't change. Yeah, it's sort of like an aural illusion kind of thing.

GM: *What was Eddie Kramer's big-picture contribution as co-producer?*
ANTON: Quite simply he was just trying to make the record as good as possible for Ace. I think he brought in "New York Groove," which was a big contribution. I remember that song was crafted very much like a single. I did the drums and played a very simple part, and then they overdubbed stuff onto it and brought in some female background vocalists.

GM: *The opening track, "Rip It Out," has been a cornerstone of Ace's live shows for decades. What makes it a standout track?*
ANTON: Well, I love that song. Before we went in to work on his album, we did some demos, and "Rip It Out" was one of the demos. And so I played the song, and we did two rounds of demos. Then he asked me to do the album. When I went up to do the album, we played the song and he said, "No, I want you to do those fills you did on the demo," and he played that to me. Those fills were just stuff that I did off the top of my head months before. Ace asked me to just kind of duplicate what I did, and then we also double-tracked the drum fills so it sounds a little more powerful, and that would have been Eddie's input, for sure. We recorded that song in a studio inside Radio City Music Hall.

GM: *Any memories of one of the poppier, more melodic numbers on the album, "What's on Your Mind"?*
ANTON: I like "What's on Your Mind" a lot. With a song like that, sometimes his writing reminds me a little bit of The Who, not the completely crashing side, but when they did poppy kind of sounding stuff. I heard a couple of songs like that on his new record. In fact, when I listened to his new album, the first thing I said to him was, "This record reminds me of the first record that we did." It just kind of has that same kind of feeling and he said, yeah, he thought so as well. I put it on and it's like, wow, it sounds like we could be right there where we were back then. It had the same vibe.

GM: *Your longtime David Letterman Band member Will Lee plays bass on three songs. Did you bring Will in?*
ANTON: I think Eddie brought him in. This was way before we worked together on *Letterman*. Will was a hot session player around New York. So I didn't even know him. I ended up recording with him very soon after that on Joan Armatrading's record, which might have been like a year or two later.

GM: *Working with Ace on his acclaimed 1978 solo record, what impressed you the most about his guitar playing?*
ANTON: Well, what has always impressed me is his strength of will to make stuff happen, and that comes through in his playing. He'll just make stuff happen the way that he wants it to happen.

THE METAL GODS RETURN WITH THE 19TH ALBUM OF PRIME **PRIEST**, *INVINCIBLE SHIELD*. **BY MARTIN POPOFF**

Judas Priest (L-R): Richie Faulkner, Rob Halford, Scott Travis, Andy Sneap and Ian Hill perform at The OVO Hydro on March 11, 2024, in Glasgow, Scotland.

ROBERTO RICCIUTI/REDFERNS

JUDAS PRIEST
INVINCIBILITY

Now three records into the Richie Faulkner era, Birmingham's metal ambassadors since 1969 are on firm footing, turning in what just might be the band's best album since 1979's *Hell Bent for Leather*. Strong words to be sure, but for this fan since '76, there's not been a collection of songs from Judas Priest this relentless and rich from track to track and steely strength to strength since that ancient and hallowed masterpiece of two realities, first as *Killing Machine* in the U.K. in 1978 and then *Hell Bent for Leather* for us across the pond in '79.

Essentially what we get with *Invincible Shield* is all of the capability and culpability of 2018's *Firepower* but with myriad surprises embedded in the songs. And when Judas Priest settle on more of a conservative tack, the melodies — and thus the memories — are stronger, while the grooves are more organic, with Scott Travis opening up that high-hat and bashing about the place, again, taking us back to the analog days of the '70s.

But you can't really go back, so this is still a production of perfection and gleaming steel, at the hands of Andy Sneap, who is also the band's touring guitarist in place of Glenn Tipton, who is waging his ongoing battle with MS. Tom Allom also produced some of the earlier sessions conducted for the album, helping the band — rounded out by bassist Ian Hill and the Metal God himself, Rob Halford — achieve their fevered dream of metal dominance.

"That's great to hear, man; I appreciate that," begins guitar-slinger Faulkner, putting up with my raves. "You never know how it's going to be when you let it go out into the world. You've put 1,000 percent into what you do. We all love it and we will get behind it, but you've just got to let it go into the world, and then you've got no control over whether it does good or bad or whether it's well-received or not.

"There's definitely some moments on this record, which are unique from *Firepower*," continues Faulkner. "In terms of

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overall sound, I've used the word progressive before. It's got a few more twists and turns, musically, than *Firepower* does. There's a Spanish classical guitar on one of them, 'Giants in the Sky,' which *Firepower* didn't have. I don't remember the last time Priest used a classical guitar. You always try and do something that's slightly different than what you did before. That's a natural thing as a creative person. Obviously, the character of the band is the character of the band. Those guys have been there for over 50 years and there's DNA, but you always try and do something that's a bit different for you as an individual and as a band to just scratch that creative itch. It usually takes something outside of the box to do that; so that's what we tried to do, along with bigger, better performances and better songs.

Richie Faulkner of Judas Priest performs onstage at The OVO Hydro on March 11, 2024, in Glasgow, Scotland.

"Oh, he's phenomenal," agrees Faulkner, on the idea that Travis' playing is increasingly fluid these days. "Scott's got everything — speed, technique, finesse, groove — and as you said, some of those grooves that he's putting down these days just mesh all those characteristics together. And he's a phenomenal guy. Vital in the band. It's a pleasure to see him when he plays and constructs his parts around the music. He's actually coming over today, so I'll tell him you said that. But yeah, he's always going to have that double-bass in his character; it's in his DNA. But again, as you said, he takes it somewhere else this time. He's growing as a musician, as we all are, hopefully."

"It's quite a big step forward, actually, from *Firepower*," muses Hill. "I think we can blame COVID for that, because we had all that time to perfect it before we started recording, although the recording for me was a little bit rushed, because we sort of went straight out on tour after COVID. We didn't have much time to get together with each other because of the restrictions. So we ended up doing most of my bass lines in hotel rooms on the road. (laughs) Because Andy's traveling with us anyway. He's filling in for Glenn, and he's got the laptop and all the stuff right there. And I don't use any effects on the bass anyway when I record. I just go straight into the desk. You don't need the effects. That goes on afterwards. So, yeah, that's how I did the bass lines. But I think it's a lot busier than albums of late, you know? Like I say, it's a step forward from a musical point of view. So yeah, I think Scott recorded in Nashville and so did Richie. Richie's got a studio in Nashville, and he recorded there. Rob used a studio in Phoenix, and I used various hotel rooms in Europe." (laughs)

The legend that is Tipton is still very much involved in the proceedings. "Yes, Glenn comes up with his ideas as he's always done," affirms Hill. "He can't play with us anymore onstage, or for any period of time, anyway, just from a strength point of view more than anything. We

> **"We don't want to come across as a one-trick pony. I mean, Priest is great in terms of diversity. There's ballads, there's songs like 'Painkiller,' there's groovy songs, there's almost boogie-flavored songs earlier on."**
>
> — RICHIE FAULKNER

just did the Power Trip thing last autumn, and he got up and he did three of the encore songs and that just about wiped him out. But there's nothing wrong between his ears. So he still comes up with the ideas and he gets together with Richie, and they work on stuff and then Rob puts on the lyrics."

"Obviously, right from the beginning, we knew that Glenn was going to be a part of the writing," adds Faulkner. "We know what Glenn is going through health-wise. So when we were coming up with stuff, if he couldn't translate his ideas on the guitar, I would be there to translate those ideas. Some of them, like 'Trial by Fire,' 'Sons of Thunder,' 'Escape from Reality,' 'Vicious Circle,' they were ideas that he could play and create and translate and also record as well. So Glenn's on it. If he could play the guitar, if he could play the track, he'd play it. If he couldn't, I'd take over, and that's how we handled it. I think everyone understands that as long as we've got Glenn as part of the creative team, that's what makes it Priest.

"Andy's obviously still filling in for Glenn live," continues Faulkner. "As I said before, if Glenn could make it out, he will. He always tries to, if he can, do the encores with us. If he can't and he's not feeling up to it, obviously, he won't. And again, I think everyone knows by now, Glenn's challenges, and if he's not there, they understand. And if he is, I mean, the roof gets blown off when Glenn comes out. The show of love and support for Glenn is overwhelming, really. So if he can, he'll be there. If he can't, he won't and we all know why."

Back to the album, I asked Faulkner why "Panic Attack" and "Trial by Fire" made good choices as advance singles.

"It's interesting; sometimes it can be hard to be objective about a single because you're so close to it as a band. You create the songs together; you sit with them for a long time and you can be unsure. You're not going to have that objective opinion on what's the best and most effective one. Sometimes the record label steps in and gives their opinion with an objective sensibility. So they suggested 'Panic Attack' for the first one. 'Trial by Fire,' we agreed with them that we wanted to show the diversity of the record. We don't want to come across as a one-trick pony. I mean, Priest is great in terms of diversity. There's ballads, there's songs like 'Painkiller,' there's groovy songs, there's almost boogie-flavored songs earlier on. Those two showcase the diversity of the album."

Rob Halford and Scott Travis of Judas Priest performing in Glasgow.

ROBERTO RICCIUTI/REDFERNS

"They're both sort of radio-friendly," chuckles Hill. "They don't really scare anybody. So you might get yourself across to people who might not otherwise listen to Judas Priest. They're a bit more mainstream there. You never know, you might turn somebody onto it that wouldn't be interested to start with. I think that's the main reason."

"Panic Attack" is a fast-paced track with a chord sequence at the verses that sticks in your brain. But the lyrics are cool as well, sleek and modern like the performance and production.

Says Faulkner of the track's messaging, "It's the way the online world is creating a different world socially, how things are misinterpreted or perceived online. Sometimes it isn't what reality is, but it's become the reality that we all live in. It's kind of a nod to that experience, really. Some people said it reminds them of the 'Electric Eye' statement, but in our time, today, I mean, Rob uses the word 'memes' in 'Panic Attack,' which is a very relevant, modern term. So, he's done some great lyrics on this record, really poignant and clever stuff. 'Trial by Fire' automatically conjures up images of witch trials and witches burning at the stake. But it's a bit ambiguous; it could be about a relationship-type experience. Which is clever, because it's immediately visual on one level, but then if you look a bit deeper and you can have another meaning."

Invincible Shield is more of an Andy Sneap production than a true co-worker job with Tom Allom, the way *Firepower* was. Allom is still there, however, due to the use of a few carry-over tracks. Asked about Sneap's contribution to the project, Faulkner says, "As a producer, Andy plays the producer role perfectly. In the writing sessions or when we've got some songs together, he will say, 'Try that bit there' or maybe, 'Change key; is there any way we can change key and make it a bit more exciting at the end?' Or 'Definitely, definitely do that, again — that's not good enough.' That's how you pull the best performances out of anyone.

"But also, there's a trust with Andy — and Tom Allom; we trust their judgment. I mean, if you can imagine someone saying to Rob Halford, 'That's not good enough; do it again,' you've got to have some authority to say that. You've got to have some background and know what you're doing. Andy and Tom have that. So Rob's comfortable with him. And we're all striving on the same team for the same result, so we trust them. When they say, 'Do it again; it's not good enough,' we know that they mean, 'There's a better one inside of you. It could be better; let's do it better.' Andy absolutely pulled those performances out of us."

And as Hill explains, Allom's specialty is vocals. "Yes, Tom comes into his own when vocals are concerned, the various harmonies that could go on and what have you, phrasing and things like that. That's his forté. And Andy lets him get on with that. But the actual recording of the songs, suggestions were coming from all sides. And you either take them or you don't." (laughs)

"Yes, Tom's great with harmonies," seconds Faulkner. "He's got an instinctual brain when it comes to putting harmonies on vocals. So yeah, he'd work with Rob a lot. Andy would work with Rob a lot as well. You know, you've got one of the most recognizable voices in metal, in music in general, really. And the goal is producing Rob so that he sounds even more fantastic than he does, you know, without those harmonies. It's embellishing what Rob does and making it better, more suited to the tracks in terms of production. Also, Tom contributes a lot to the vibe. Tom's a veteran. By five o'clock, it's wine o'clock. You get the bottle of wine out, and it creates a great atmosphere in the studio. Andy and Tom — we're fortunate to have them both."

The official *Invincible Shield* album is 11 tracks, but there's an additional three so-called bonus tracks. One of them, "The Lodger," is an eyebrow-raising song that elicits comparisons with Queen, Alice Cooper and Guns N' Roses.

"Yes, that's from Bob Halligan Jr." explains Faulkner. "He sent us the song a while ago. He thought it would be appropriate for Priest, and it kept rearing its head. We were writing some tunes and this one, 'The Lodger,' crept back into our consciousness. It's a unique song. We didn't put it on the standard release of the record, but we thought it was a great song and wanted to put it out there along with the other bonus tracks. We didn't want those songs to sit on the shelf; we wanted them to be out there. You know what it's like, when sometimes you hear a band's bonus tracks and you like those better than the ones on the record. So we wanted it out there, but just not part of the standard release. It's a great song. And obviously, Bob Halligan Jr. has got a history with the band. So we thought it was appropriate in that sense as well."

"We've used a couple of his tracks over the years," adds Hill. "We weren't too sure about it to start with, which is probably why it's on the bonus disc there. I must admit, I do like it. It's got that different vibe. It's a very simple song, but it's effective for all of that, you know? 'Giants in the Sky' is another great song, because of the light and shade. I mean, Richie did that classical guitar passage on that middle part there. He was asked, 'Can you add a little bit there?' and he did it in one take. (laughs) That's a song that probably should have been on *Firepower*. Didn't make it. Not because it's inferior in any way. Once you've heard it, you know there's a song there. But it didn't fit the flow of that album; there were two or three left over that we worked on to the point where they were worthy."

Continues Hill, "I really like the title track, 'Invincible Shield,' because it takes me back. It's got hints of 'Victim' and maybe 'Sinner' and 'The Sentinel,' with lots of different parts and different avenues. That's my favorite one at the moment, or the one that struck me, although it's early days yet. 'Panic Attack;' the synths at the beginning on that is something we very rarely use. 'The Serpent and the King,' I mean, that's really right in your face, one of the classic Priest high-tempo, heads down, see you at the end sorts of songs, which is set nicely against mid-tempo things like 'Trial by Fire.'"

"I find them all hard these days," laughs Faulkner, asked about his wild guitar soloing all over the record. "'The Serpent and the King' is a fast track; the faster ones are always a bit more difficult. The title track, 'Invincible Shield,' has some different parts on there which are a challenge. Sometimes you listen back and you play along with the song and think, 'What was I thinking there? I'm not going to be able to play that live!' Especially after a year off. I've got to brush off the cobwebs. But yeah, the title track and 'As God Is My Witness,' as well ... there are some challenging solos. But hopefully I'll be able to play those live."

Asked about his character as a guitarist, Faulkner figures, "It's funny; you know, sometimes when you're writing both songs and solos, they take on a flavor of

their own, almost subconsciously. And I think that's the purest form of what we call influence, our influences coming out. I don't necessarily try to do that. It's just something that naturally comes out and you recognize it. You recognize that the solo's taking on that color, and you recognize where it's coming from. On the title track, 'Invincible Shield,' there are Randy Rhoads elements in there. 'Devil in Disguise' took on a Ritchie Blackmore-type vibe. But I'm always trying to craft my own sound, I'm always trying to say my own thing, hopefully something that's unique. I've struggled with it. It's been a challenge for me. I played a lot of covers when I was younger and I can play a lot of covers, but my own voice has eluded me. So I'm always striving to say something that's unique to me. Hopefully, as I move along in my career, I can establish that."

"Richie is probably the best guitarist I've heard for a very, very long time," notes Hill, who's heard a lot of them in his 55 years touring with Priest. "He's quick on the uptake. He probably knows more songs from Judas Priest than I do. He'll just pull them out of the bag. He's a bit of a perfectionist as well; when he plays, he loves to get it spot-on. He's a very talented bloke, and even after we're gone, he's got a great future in front of him, I'm sure."

And together they gather, all in the service of metal, reflected in the title of the album.

Says Faulkner, "*Invincible Shield*, to me, means the metal that we all stand behind and love and are proud of and hold high above our heads while saying, 'This is our community,' our metal community. It's invincible, we're proud of it, and it will never go away. It's what makes us who we are as metal musicians. That's what it means to me. It's a banner to hold high and say, 'Yeah, this is us.'"

"Rob thought of that," says Hill, in closing. "It's about all the stuff that gets thrown at you for being a heavy metal band, by people trying to kill you off. They're constantly telling us it's dead, it's no more, there's no future. And yet here we are; we're still going after all these years. There's a lot of up-and-coming bands showing up as well. You know, as soon as we fall off our perch, somebody else will take it and it'll carry on. As long as younger metal bands keep coming along, it'll remain relevant and understandable, and it's got a great future."

TOP FIVE SONGS FROM *INVINCIBLE SHIELD*

From "Panic Attack" to "Escape From Reality," the tunes on Judas Priest's new album, *Invincible Shield,* are as good as heavy metal gets. As *Goldmine* scribe Martin Popoff puts it: "This is the best thing they've done since *Hell Bent for Leather.*" In fact, a few songs from *Invincible Shield* sound like they could have been placed on that 1979 platter. And that's a good thing for many longtime Priest fans.

Needless to say, you should get the album *Invincible Shield* — preferably the deluxe edition — but the following are five choices from the album that are must-have picks for your molten metal playlist.

"Panic Attack"

What a way to start off a new heavy metal album to the masses! A 40-second introductory melodic guitar maelstrom leads into a helluva guitar grind, and then it's full-speed ahead from there on. Panic attack, indeed! "The clock is ticking down to doomsday hour," snarls vocalist Rob Halford, and then lyrically listing a whole bunch of panic-worthy problems of the internet age, or as he sums it up, it is "digitally criminally insane."

Halford's powerfully witty delivery blends in perfectly with blood-thirsty guitar solos and dual guitar melodies — a Priest standard — and completes what is sure to become a fan favorite.

"Vicious Circle"
(Deluxe Edition bonus track)

According to guitarist Richie Faulkner, one of the first guitar riffs Priest icon Glenn Tipton developed for *Invincible Shield* came in the form of "Vicious Circle." The Metallica-y crunch on this metal gem is wonderfully delivered within a concise three-minute time frame, and a true Halford metal chorus glues it all together.

"Devil in Disguise"

The lyrics in this catchy *Screaming for Vengeance*-type song could easily be referring to a bunch of (unfortunately) well-known politicians in America's current political arena, who use the words of God, the greater good, patriotism and populist promises as an opportunity to gain their own individual power and distinct limelight. *Truly* devils in disguise. Halford delivers this one with perfection, and in this ugly election year in the states, it's wonderfully cathartic.

"Escape From Reality"

More Tipton guitar ideas that were brought to the band early on led to this metallic beauty. And massive credit needs to be given to Rob Halford as well. For a metal vocalist in his early seventies, Halford is in top form on this studio disc. It is a truly astonishing feat, as he delivers straight-to-the-point choruses with an intensity that has always been his strength.

"Fight of Your Life"
(Deluxe Edition bonus track)

Holy "Delivering the Goods"! Listen to that guitar riffage and drool, longtime graying Priest fans! The song "Fight of Your Life" could easily find a home on the track listing of *Hell Bent for Leather,* only 45 years later. Fans who worship Priest's '70s catalog will be ecstatic about this one. And, hey, if the band never performs a track like "Delivering the Goods" again, then they should consider "Fight of Your Life" as a concert delight. It could be an *Unleashed in the East* flashback at the very least.

— Patrick Prince

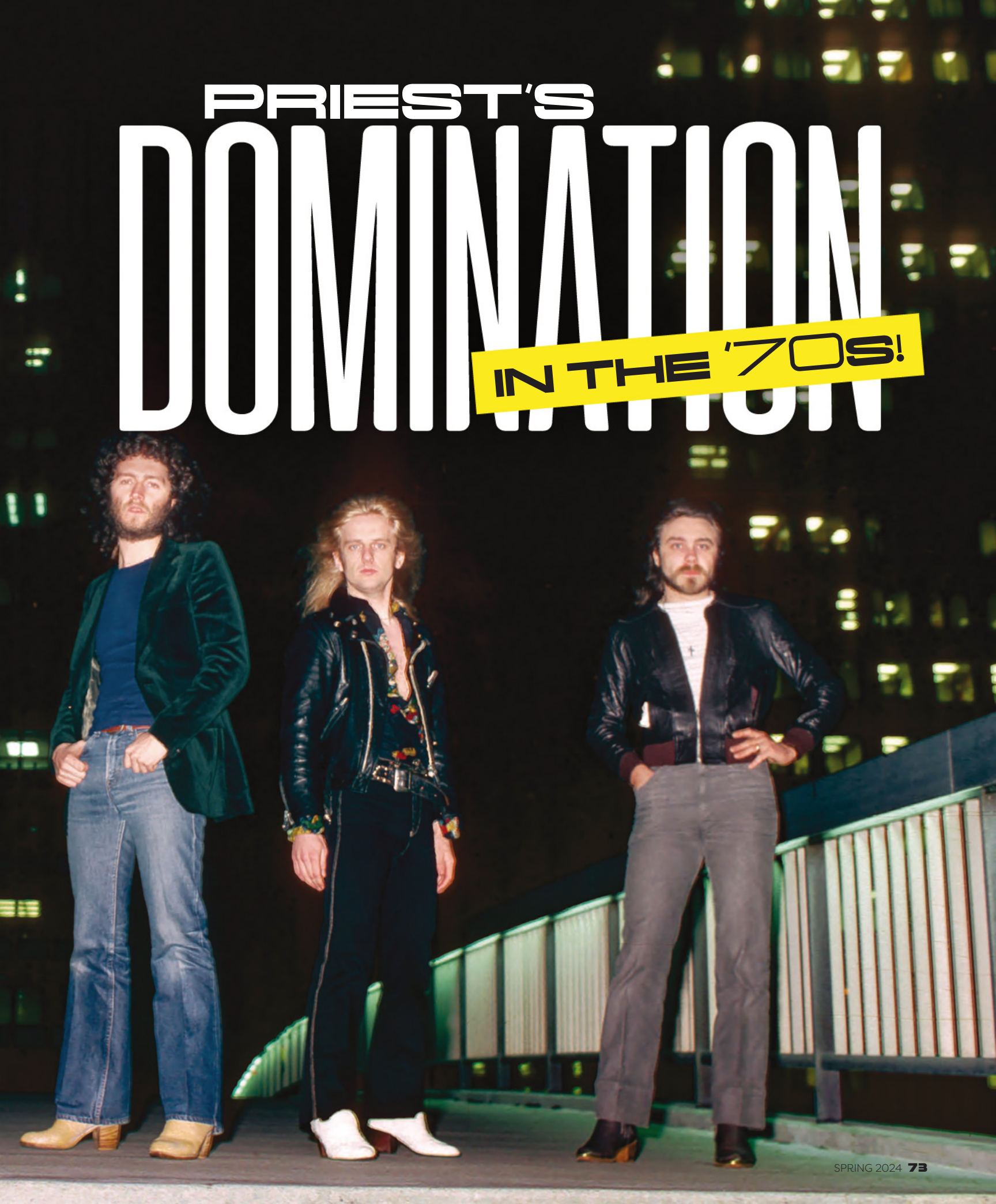
JUDAS PRIEST'S 1970s SONGS GET RANKED, WITH A GRAND SALUTE TO SOME OF THE BEST HEAVY ROCK MUSIC EVER MADE

BY MARTIN POPOFF

The classic 1970s lineup of Judas Priest (L-R): Glenn Tipton, Rob Halford, Les Binks, K.K. Downing and Ian Hill.

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

PRIEST'S DOMINATION IN THE '70S!



Here we go, folks. To commemorate the release of Judas Priest's new album, *Invincible Shield*, we present to you a reverent celebration of the esteemed place this band came from. This is every song from the five albums the band did in the 1970s — *Rocka Rolla* ('74), *Sad Wings of Destiny* ('76), *Sin After Sin* ('77), *Stained Class* ('78) and *Hell Bent for Leather* ('79) — ranked and discussed in reverse order.

47 "Caviar and Meths" (Instrumental)

I totally love Judas Priest's worst song of the '70s! That's how ridiculous it is, putting this task in my hands. Anyway, this song began life in the [original singer] Al Atkins era as a 14-minute epic, and now it's a 2:03 instrumental outro on the first album. It's folk, it's prog, it's actually a little bit creepy to the point where it could have replaced "Orchid" or "Embryo" on Black Sabbath's *Master of Reality* and upheld that record's spell.

46 "Deep Freeze"

We even have to cheat to find songs to fill the bottom rungs, don't we? "Deep Freeze" is 1:58 of squalling, scary guitar noises that isn't even named as a song on some versions of *Rocka Rolla*. I've always likened it to "Didacts and Narpets" on Rush's *Caress of Steel* or "FX" on the Sabs' *Vol 4*.

45 "Epitaph"

I'll pick on "Epitaph" because I've always found it a bit too bouncy and Elton John to fit on *Sad Wings of Destiny*. It's a piano ballad, but there are also some nice Queen touches in the chord changes and harmonies. It picks up at the end to the point where you're really impressed that a baby band on a budget could stick around to add this much detailing to one of their non-characteristic songs.

44 "Winter Retreat"

This is the third of four chunks of the so-called "Winter Suite," and it's 1:30 of dour, slightly blues-tinged (or at least it gives me the blues) mellow music before "Cheater" galumphs into view. Once more the comparative is Rush, this time, the mellow part of "Twilight Zone" from *2112*.

43 "Prelude"

"Prelude" is the creepy fanfare music put before "Tyrant" on *Sad Wings of Destiny*. Heck, the Canadian-issue Janus Records copy that I bought as a new release back in '76 didn't have the song listed or included — side two started right in with "Tyrant." But again, even though it's piano at the core, a bunch of stuff gets added as it builds, and you come away impressed that the guys managed to get this on tape.

42 "Dreamer Deceiver"

This is a full-on complete song from *Sad Wings of Destiny* that is one of two very pronounced and distinct ballads among the heavy metal mayhem. I like that instead of piano, it's a mix of sparse acoustic and lightly approached electric guitars across a slow beat. Other than the presence of a drum kit, one could picture this as actual renaissance music, which fits the hundreds-years-old vibe of the album.

41 "Before the Dawn"

Hell Bent for Leather (*Killing Machine* in the U.K., which is one song less, the Fleetwood Mac cover) is my most beloved Priest album and I could have done without this lone ballad across a record that already showed so much diversity, granted, all within a heavy metal box. It's vocals, acoustic guitars and bass but no drums, and at 3:23, it's about 3:23 too long. Gotta hand it to Priest though, every one of these early Priest ballads could be the soundtrack to someone weeping over a gravestone.

40 "Last Rose of Summer"

Man, yet again, Priest put together an arrangement and set of chords that sound like Rush circa '75 and '76 and at no other time at all. Within the catalog, this *Sin After Sin* track is closest to "Dreamer Deceiver," although it's a few percentage points happier, maybe wistful with a hint of optimism, to the point where somebody in the organization I'm sure half thought that if it got played on radio, it might sucker somebody into buying the album. Instead, it was completely ignored; barely tolerated, it seems.

39 "Winter"

This is the front-facing full song from the "Winter Suite," and it's credited to original singer Atkins, who founded the band back in 1969, plus K.K. Downing and Ian Hill. It's a huge, spooky doom song, the closest thing to Priest doing Sabbath on *Rocka Rolla*. I gotta say, I'll never understand how the guys think the production on *Rocka Rolla* is bad. For 1974 and really, all the way through to about 1978, I think it sounds great, with huge guitars, all the bass you need and all the treble you need. Honestly, I think what they really mean is that their playing is restrained.

38 "Run of the Mill"

"Run of the Mill" sounds like every other Priest ballad in the '70s except it's 8:13 long. It's sturdy enough, meaning no better or no worse, but it's full-band and even has a doomy bit, albeit only used twice. Otherwise, there's a long, bluesy solo section and a build to a full-volume close at which point we hear *Rocka Rolla*'s most impressive high Halford wails.

37 "Dying to Meet You"

Amusingly, "Dying to Meet You" is essentially the third multi-part epic on *Rocka Rolla*, and it's the shortest, at 6:19, and mathematically the heaviest. The first half is a typical morose and medieval ballad thing but with intrusive leviathan riffs, and then once they get bored with that, the guys break into a galloping heavy metal song that sounds like a cross between "Cheater," "Island of Domination" and Nazareth.

36 "One for the Road"

First album, side one, track one ... may we present to you "One for the Road." It's a smart take on blues metal, a hybrid that is at this point a good five years old. Still, Zeppelin never did anything like this, although Sabbath did and so did Budgie, who were friends and tour mates with Priest and from a similarly secondary city, Cardiff versus Birmingham. There's a tricky prog time signature to the song, which speaks to budding sophistication. This gets turned in upon itself during the lead break, also portending that Priest are on their way to greater things.

35 "Diamonds and Rust"

It would have been interesting to have seen them do this with one of their own ballads, but nonetheless here we go with Priest covering Joan Baez and then arranging it into a polite and nascent heavy metal gallop, like Nazareth with Joni Mitchell's "This Flight Tonight." It adds a nice contour to the *Sin After Sin* album and at 3:23, the idea isn't beaten to death.

34 "Cheater"

The first two heavy rock songs on *Rocka Rolla* are good and different from each other but not particularly modern. Then we hear "Cheater," and we are approaching the magnificence of *Sad Wings of Destiny*, despite the harmonica. To be sure, the vocal phrasing is a remnant of the British blues boom, but that sort of gallop and note-dense riffing is a clue that Glenn Tipton and K.K. Downing are about to overhaul heavy metal.

33 "Here Come the Tears"

Depending on what you call "Beyond the Realms of Death," there's really only one ballad from the band ("Before the Dawn") from here clear through to "Night Comes Down" in 1984. And I'd call this the best of the bunch, apocalyptic, harrowing, depressing as hell, with Halford sounding like a wailing, deep-voiced demon woman all over the dreary and doomy second half of this sorrowful sledge.

32 "Take on the World"

This drum-propelled locomotive of a novelty song is Priest's answer to "We Will Rock You," and it's a better song than that, with a more interesting rhythm, a quicker tempo, a

more substantial chorus and just more guitars. "Take on the World" is also celebrated as one of the first songs promoting the new breed of metal army that is about to coalesce around the New Wave of British Heavy Metal.

31 "Evening Star"

I complain about this one the way Purple fans grouse about "Never Before" on *Machine Head*. In other words, it's a bit simple and under-written and uninspired compared to the band's usual fare. It's actually named for a local newspaper, but that doesn't stop it from sounding a bit like a heavy metal Christmas carol.

30 "Never Satisfied"

Sure it's slow and blues-based in its chord sequence and general framing, but "Never Satisfied" is heavy metal enough to feel modern to the point of *Sad Wings*-worthy. And then, come the lead break, the guys devise a lethal riff to stick behind the soloing. Maybe I'm a bit suckered by it being the first track on side two of the original vinyl, but to me this sounds like the most professional song on *Rocka Rolla*. Love the wind-down at the end as well, which culminates in a soaring, "We are ... never ... satisfied!"

29 "Better by You, Better Than Me"

I've always resented this song being on *Stained Class*, both because it's a cover (Gary Wright, Spooky Tooth) and because it stuck out as this record's "Evening Star," namely "less than." As much as Priest dress it up, it puts into high relief how futuristic their new bank of originals is.

28 "Evil Fantasies"

I love that the band are brave enough to play this slow and that there's an element of Led Zeppelin and even "Last Child"-like Aerosmith that the guys pull out of their magic treasure chest. But alas, people have always complained about this song, not wanting to hear about Halford's evil fantasies, particularly in a Louis Armstrong voice. But the chorus is substantial, there's a psychedelic break, and at the end, we get to hear the beat at double time, at which point Priest sound like Guns N' Roses.

27 "The Green Manalishi (With the Two-Pronged Crown)"

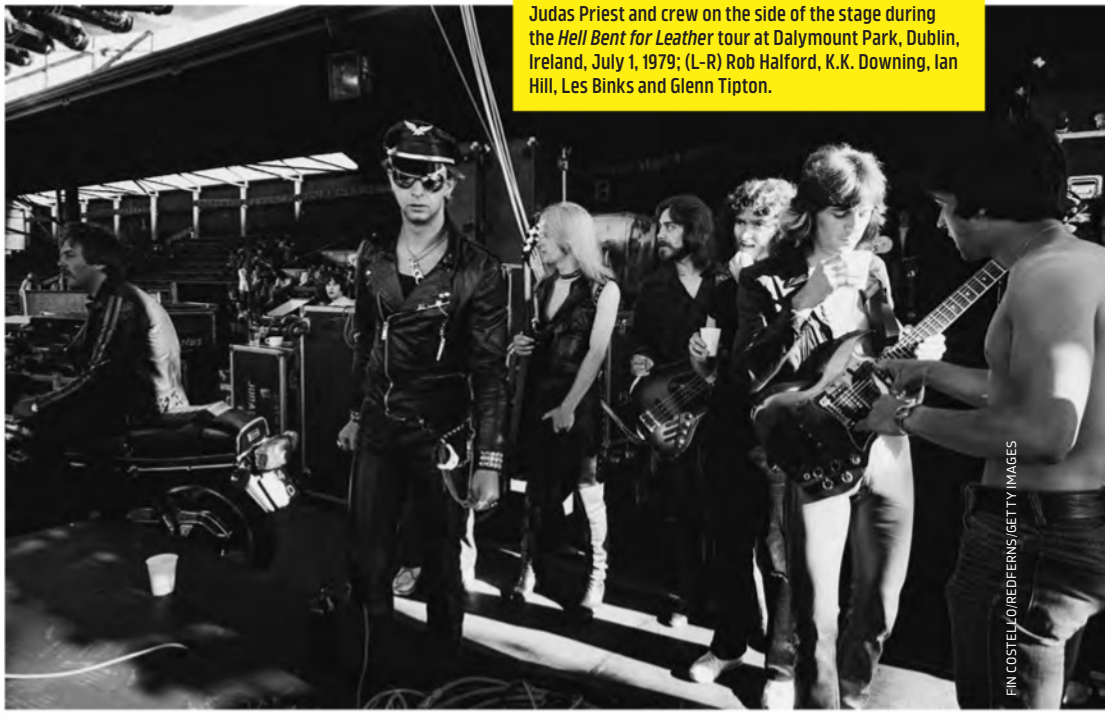
I fondly recall how me and my buddies freaked out at getting this song on *Hell Bent for Leather* after living with *Killing Machine* for however many weeks. We loved it, but over the years I grew to feeling distracted at having a cover version on the album, as crushing as it was. It's so transformed into a massive sledge of metal though, it's pathetic of me to complain. Plus, it because a huge fan favorite live.

WATAL ASANUMA/SHINKO MUSIC/GETTY IMAGES

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

GUS STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

(Left) Rob Halford singing during a Judas Priest concert at the Hammersmith Odeon, London, England, February 10, 1978. (Below left) Halford ends a show in 1979. (Below) Halford and Glenn Tipton performing live onstage in 1979.


FIN COSTELLO/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES

Judas Priest and crew on the side of the stage during the *Hell Bent for Leather* tour at Dalymount Park, Dublin, Ireland, July 1, 1979; (L-R) Rob Halford, K.K. Downing, Ian Hill, Les Binks and Glenn Tipton.

26 "Rocka Rolla"

Academics aside, this is hands down the best spot of pure joyous songwriting on the band's first album, to the point where I could see this irresistible anthem holding its own on *British Steel*. The way the guitars chatter to each other recalls the famed weaves of The Rolling Stones and AC/DC, and the Celtic twin lead is as catchy as "Whiskey in the Jar."

25 "Island of Domination"

It's songs like this that had us thinking as 13-year-olds in 1976 that Judas Priest were the smartest heavy metal band ever, the first to significantly change the game most recently over and above *Sabotage,* but really all the way back to 1970. In other words — and this has never changed inside my dented head — *Sad Wings* was framed as the first Richter blip in heavy metal evolution since the genre was invented way back on Friday the 13th, 1970.

24 "Beyond the Realms of Death"

It's impossible not to think of this song without lamenting that tragic suicide pact (Nevada, 1985) and the subsequent trial (1990), but of course on its own, "Beyond the Realms of Death" is recognized as Priest's "Stairway to Heaven." It's also regularly cited as the song with the greatest Priest guitar solos in it, and it's also the only place on *Stained Class* where we hear any soft music, even if that one part — you all know it — is actually the heaviest thing on the album.

23 "Stained Class"

I've always viewed "Stained Class" as the follow-up to "Diamonds and Rust," meaning it's the perkiest and most polite of heavy metal gallops, and on the band's next record, with the same somewhat disconcerting high and histrionic recording values to boot. Only this time it's an original, meaning that we get more thoughtful and obscure chord changes, plus the opportunity to write a substantive chorus. Love the way it adds to the band's legacy of sort of heavy metal church music, too.

22 "Saints in Hell"

Speaking of church music, here's some more fire and brimstone for yer Catholic mass. This lesser-discussed, stained glass, *Stained Class* classic is proggy yet groovy like "Sinner" and "Starbreaker," and features impossibly high Halford vocals to go with Dennis Mackay's toppy production. Given the band's almost divine intervention-level creativity at this juncture, there are so many genius parts, you just stop noticing them at some point.

21 "Invader"

They've bespoke of centuries past; now it's time to defend the Earth from alien attack. What better soundtrack than the superhuman futuristic technical metal Tipton and Downing were crafting at this juncture? Add in phaser sounds and we're off to the space races, "Invader" building in tension and then grooving at the chorus, aided and abetted by drummer Les Binks perfectly ting-tinging the bell of his ride cymbal.

20 "Raw Deal"

Halford's most overt gay sex lyric went right over our heads as kids, while we focused on this song's slightly too funky verse, which was never going to sound heavy enough with Roger Glover's fusion production values. But there are so many other parts and so much instrumental musical dialogue, culminating in the melancholy Sabbath chords for the closing maelstrom. Fact is, it's the kind of song that has us debating these days whether Priest in the '70s were actually a progressive metal band.

19 "Deceiver"

I always considered "Deceiver" and "Island of Domination" the rear

K.K. Downing and Rob Halford delivering the goods live at the Oakland Coliseum in 1977, in Oakland, California.

RICHARD MCCAFFREY/ MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/ GETTY IMAGES

wheels of *Sad Wings of Destiny*, both tucked at the ends of their sides, both slick and modern, quietly making the case for this album as a masterpiece. It's about the brainiac widdly riff, it's about the tight gallop, it's about Halford's dog whistle "Forever!" vocal. As a bonus, I love how the mayhem dissipates for the lonely acoustic guitar outro.

18 "Killing Machine"

This one encourages "Evil Fantasies" to exist, saying "I got your back." The two together are the slow, "less is more" songs on the album, with drummer Binks laying back and letting thespian Halford do his thing. The riffs are brainy here as well, and the guys are smart enough to know they have to offer some excitement eventually, which they do in spades for the lead break. At the end, Binks provides some thudly double-bass drums on the chorus fade, underscoring the idea that this is a snarling, combative record.

17 "Starbreaker"

It's perhaps the most melodic and mainstream of the non-ballad songs on 1977's *Sin After Sin*, but since the album's release, we never viewed it as anything but egregiously heavy. Maybe it's the title, the thickness of the verse riff, or the more serious and war-like feel of the chorus (handclaps notwithstanding), but yeah, this is an infectious headbanger, not to mention nice and noisy at the chorus-stuffed conclusion.

16 "Savage"

Folks don't talk about this one much, but for years it was my favorite on *Stained Class*, the angry young metalhead in me figuring it was the heaviest, most Sabbath-like and most Bill Ward-like. I like the muttering vocal phrasing as well, and although I'm not a fan of shuffles, I like the sideways shuffle feel, along with the slightly open high-hat groove created by Binks and his sober use of double-bass drums.

15 "Sinner"

As first track on the album and titled like that, you've got to consider "Sinner" to be *Sin After Sin*'s title track by proxy. And the music enclosed supports that claim, being epic and sort of grandly religious, but cruising along at a hummable middle pace. But then the mood changes and it gets heavier, first for the reverse-beat chorus, then during at least four if not five fully composed break sections, with the longest performed to a surprisingly psychedelic half-time groove. All told, this turns out to be an ambitious track full of futuro-metal delights.

14 "Genocide"

It's back to the imposing and sober *Sad Wings of Destiny* for a groovy, uncluttered rocker loaded with personality. "Genocide" was considered lethal enough to be included on the heaviest album of all of the 1970s, namely Priest's *Unleashed in the East* live album, and maybe that's because of the downright carnal second break section, followed by the unbelievably heavy and completely unexpected closing spot of heavy metal wonderment.

13 "White Heat, Red Hot"

I've got this lesser discussed but scientific *Stained Class* rocker high on the list because it might have the coolest riff of the entire canon, not to mention how it collapses into an upper mid-tempo groove for the chorus, with Halford spitting out the titular words. Then we get a huge drum fill from Binks, followed by a modulation for the solo break and then another creep, super-heavy but religious-feeling closing section, totally out of left field. Incredible how much poison Priest can cook up in the lab in just four minutes and change.

12 "Heroes End"

Famous for the wacky riff that inverts and folds in upon itself, "Heroes End" finds Halford working with bassist Hill and Binks to make the song fluid, providing conversational vocal phrasing that just glides over the geometry on offer from Tipton and Downing. But they aren't done yet: The break on this one could have been the basis for a whole extra song. And then there's one other set of riffs as well, upon which all manner of fiery soloing takes place.

11 "Victim of Changes"

If you weren't buying me calling "Beyond the Realms of Death" the band's "Stairway to Heaven," then I know this is the song you were thinking of. Almost eight minutes long, this is an old one, or rather a mix of new and old, picking up on Al Atkins' "Whiskey Woman" composition. But it's crushingly heavy, with a legendary intro and iconic high vocals from Halford at the vaulted close. All told, it's arguably the band's most respected song.

10 "Exciter"

There's arguably no more exciting intro in heavy metal history, especially in terms of historical importance within its era. Binks does what Scott Travis will do a dozen years later on "Painkiller," but this is before double bass is much of a thing, and five years before Metallica would invent thrash. Once the verse kicks in, the guys settle down, almost amusingly. But the sense of chaos is back once we get to the chorus, with heavy metal fireworks shooting off in all directions. But yes, "Exciter," with its mechanical tightness and palm-muted riffing, is considered one of the key building block songs that would invent thrash.

9 "Tyrant"

There's a ton of respect for this long-standing *Sad Wings of Destiny* classic, given its no-nonsense upper mid-tempo headbang of a riff. But then things get "religious" again for the chorus, underscoring this record's weird Gothic cathedral vibe. That sense of decorum continues through the complex break and solo sections, before the guys set up a surprise late verse — always love when bands do that.

8 "Let Us Prey/Call for the Priest"

There are two albums left to go in the '70s, but all the way back on *Sin After Sin*, Priest turn in their fastest, trickiest, most progressive metal song, which drove us insane as kids, because nobody was doing this. Credit drummer Simon Phillips, of course, the fusion wunderkid, for igniting a fire under Tipton and Downing. It's unfortunate that the titling of this song has always been a mess across the versions of this album put out over the years, but that can't stop the enjoyment of the intense metal mania that takes place after the opening hymn is over.

7 "Rock Forever"

Great use of double bass on a shuffle by Binks here, upon an airtight and irresistible fastback rocker. What we're witnessing is the band growing leaps and bounds in the songwriting department, learning how to make songs that are uncompromisingly metal and yet accessible to a latent headbanging public that wants to crack a beer and check out this kind of music. And don't forget, that's kind of what the song is about: convincing people how cool metal is.

6 "The Ripper"

A lot of Priestly scholars will pick *Sad Wings* as the band's greatest album, but they won't go inside and put this song at the top. But it's my favorite by a long shot, for its pirate metal swagger and the quantity of dramatic and technically brilliant metal moves they make in a song that's under three minutes long. I'd say across the first two albums, this is the only song that provides the quantity of actionable events, in such a concentrated space, that we see from Queen hither and thither on *Queen, II* and *Sheer Heart Attack*.

5 "Running Wild"

Well, here's Priest packing in a lot of heavy metal living once again on a composition of under three minutes. A polished jewel of a song, "Running Wild" chugs efficiently while also paying attention to melody, with Halford exuding confidence at the lyric and vocal end, commandeering the band through

Rob Halford's SIX SONGS OF THE '70s

BY MARTIN POPOFF

Rob Halford holding his copy of the U.K. album *Killing Machine* in front of his home on July 23, 1979.

BIRMINGHAM POST AND MAIL ARCHIVE/MIRRORPIX/MIRRORPIX VIA GETTY IMAGES

Of course, Rob Halford is rightly pleased with the new *Invincible Shield* album, commenting that, "Reinforcing all the great elements and the DNA of this band is as potent as it ever was. I think, like every other album, it's already got its own identity. There's something happening on this record that clearly wasn't there on *Firepower*. It's just become a bit more focused. As far as looking at the previous 18, I think this one's already garnering a really important level of, 'OK, this is cool; they've made a really cool metal album. They've done something here with these songs.' But yes, the completion of the *Invincible Shield* adventure is something special. There's something going on here that that wasn't as apparent on *Firepower*."

But the purpose of this little side diversion is to have Halford comment on a tidy six-pack of the songs from the '70s. He'd seen my ranked list beforehand, and this is what he had to say:

"Never Satisfied"

"You know, I've just been listening to *Rocka Rolla* for the first time in forever, because it's 50 this year, and I've been working with the tape and listening to the way that the phrasing is on 'Never Satisfied' and actually on 'Run of the Mill' and it's just amazing. Right from *Rocka Rolla* to your top three songs, it just shows the breadth and the scope that this band has been through and still be able to call it metal."

"Sinner"

"There's a great story when we were doing that album. (Rob looks around) I had my thesaurus around me earlier on. I've still got the same thesaurus that I bought when we were making *Sin After Sin* with Roger Glover. And I was always in the corner in the control room while he was working, going through my thesaurus. And it took forever for him to go, 'Anything good in the Bible today?' I said, 'What are you talking about?' 'Are you reading the Bible?' I go, 'I guess it's the Bible; it's the Bible of words to me. But no, it's Roget's Thesaurus.' So there's 'Sinner' and your Bible connectivity (laughs)."

"The Ripper"

"It's just trying to create an experience with a message that you haven't done before. And how difficult is that? You know about that; you're a writer. There's only so many words you can use. How do you coalesce all of this information into a statement that short, like into a paragraph or a phrase? How do you do that? It's really cool you mention that song, because when you talk about 'The Ripper,' my immediate brainwaves go to 'Trial by Fire.' Why am I making that connection? Probably because of the history in the message of those songs. 'Trial by Fire' relates back to Salem, Massachusetts, in 17-whatever, and 'The Ripper' is from Victorian England. So I haven't really strayed far off the Sherwood Forest path in that respect, have I?"

"Burnin' Up"

"Well, it's pretty cool that you've put that one so high, because just again, it shows the diversity of this band. Especially 'Burnin' Up' more than most from that album [*Hell Bent for Leather*]. Just listen to the structure of 'Burnin' Up;' it's remarkable. How did we make that happen?!"

"Delivering the Goods"

"That choppy guitar riff at the very beginning (sings it)—where did that come from?! You know, that opening guitar phrase. And then the main riff (sings it)—what is that?! You know, from the hands of Glenn and K.K. at that time; they're just remarkable. The phrasing of that song and the instrumentation are absolutely extraordinary. What other band has made a song like that? I don't know. I can't think of any other one. And that pre-chorus is very important. And yet, ironically, in some of our songs, sometimes the pre-chorus can just be a throwaway line. But yeah, to make the connection from a verse to a chorus, to create a little bit of apprehension, a little bit of a space, that gives the chorus far more clout."

"Hell Bent for Leather"

"Glenn pretty much composed that song. The whole arrangement for that song is just so definitive, and, equally, it's become like the banner. Hell bent for leather—that's Judas f**king Priest. You know, that's the guy on the bike. That's the message of what that song is about. That authoritarianism and just, you know, stomping all over people's faces with these big metal boots — it's all in that track."

WATAL ASANUMA/SHINKO MUSIC VIA GETTY IMAGES

Rob Halford and K.K. Downing of Judas Priest at Halford's home in Birmingham, England, 1978.

THE DIFFERENT PRODUCERS OF PRIEST'S '70s ALBUMS

Here's Judas Priest bassist **Ian Hill** commenting on the zesty collection of producers the band used over the course of the '70s — *different every time*!

Rodger Bain, on *Rocka Rolla*:
"I do remember him falling asleep when we were mixing it because we were on the graveyard shift. We recorded it overnight, because of the budget being where it was. Night rates were a hell of a lot cheaper than day rates. We were all tired. It wasn't really the way to do things. I don't know what happened with Rodger. I think he … not so much gave up, but he got a bit despondent, I think, with the way he was having to work. And the production, I think it's universally agreed that it's not the best in the world. And I don't really think it was all Rodger's fault. I think there were other factors that went into it at the time we were recording. But I mean, the songs were already written and ready to go, and it was basically going in there and playing them. We'd already played all of them live onstage, so it was basically getting in the studio and putting them down, and trying to make them sound as good as we could. It was that simple, really. I think the whole thing was done in two or three weeks."

Jeffrey Calvert, Max West and Judas Priest, on *Sad Wings of Destiny*:
"That was Jeffrey and Max; they were the producers. Chris Tsangarides at the time, he was an engineer; he was working at Morgan Studios. You could see his potential though; he was a very good engineer. But for production, the credit must go to Max and Jeffrey. But you'd come up with a song and Rob [Halford] would say, 'I've got something that will fit with that.' That's how it went together. There was no grand plan or grand design. I was in an interview the other day, and I said, 'We pretty much winged it.' And we still are; we're still winging it. You're doing something and you really don't know what it's going to sound like until you've finished it. So, we've been lucky. What we've put out, people have enjoyed, and they've gone out and bought it, which is good news for us." (laughs).

Roger Glover, on *Sin After Sin*:
"Roger came in and I think he brought a bit of stability. Obviously, [Deep] Purple were a very huge band at the time, and he brought that experience with him. He did make suggestions. He calmed things down a bit. He calmed *me* down a bit. He was the first one to say to me, 'That's a little bit busy; can you do less there?' (laughs) 'Just fewer notes; there's too many notes.' He was the first one to do that. And if you listen to *Sin After Sin*, it's a very clean album. It's very sharp, very clean. And of course, we had Simon Phillips as well on drums, and he lent his character to it as well. In fact, some of the songs' characters were down to his drumming. 'Dissident Aggressor,' which was one of my favorite all-time songs, for me, nearly all of it comes from the drums, his drum patterns on that. There's no complicated patterns there. It's more what he leaves out than what he puts in. And to this day, like I say, it's one of my favorite tracks. It sticks in my mind from all that time ago."

Dennis MacKay, on *Stained Class*:
"Dennis was a great engineer more than anything, and he did a good job of making the album sound great. Any specific suggestions he made, I can't remember after all this time, but he did a tremendous job on the sound of the record. It did sound up to date for that date, the best-sounding album that we'd done. And I'd say credit to him for that. Great bloke as well. Funny man, great sense of humor."

James Guthrie, on *Hell Bent for Leather*:
"Yeah, James brought enthusiasm. He's got this boundless enthusiasm, James. I think it was probably because he used to keep the control room at a really low temperature. It was like walking into a fridge. You know, you couldn't fall asleep. Even if you weren't doing anything. 'I've got nothing to do until tomorrow;' you know, you still couldn't fall asleep. Or you couldn't relax. He was there and he was on it. He came up with loads of suggestions for things, but they were minor at the time. But they all went towards the whole. And like I say, it was full-on with James, really great bloke. Another really nice fella."

SONY MUSIC ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES/TOM SHEEHAN

Judas Priest at the rehearsal studio during the spring of 1977.

changes on a dime. Once we get to the end, it's just a smoke-choked riot of guitar squalls from Downing while Binks thunders away on double bass, providing an almost extreme metal contrast to the cruise we've enjoyed for the first two-thirds of the song.

4 "Dissident Aggressor"

Is this the heaviest Priest song of the '70s? Slayer probably thought so. Otherwise, why would they consider it scary enough to stand up against their pulverising originals all over *South of Heaven* 10 years later? And how about that reverse-fade intro, followed by an inhuman Halford scream and a dramatic roundhouse fill by drummer Simon Phillips? Once we're down to business, because of the majesty and brutishness of that evil riff, all Phillips can do is clump around the guitars the way Bill Ward does on "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath."

3 "Burnin' Up"

It's funny, thinking back, but no one in our teenage gang of Priest disciples back in '79 ever took notice that this song was particularly boy-girl, let alone boy-boy, or that it was funky or accessible. Seriously, it always seemed as metal as everything else on *Hell Bent for Leather* and hugely fun and hooky at the same time. And yeah, years later I still love it to death because it's just so darn musical and beyond that, insanely groovy.

2 "Hell Bent for Leather"

Among the band's beautifully crafted short songs, "Hell Bent for Leather" combines the musicality of "Running Wild" with the swashbuckling drama of "The Ripper." It's also thicker, more of a wall of sound, than those two. And of course, what a title to wrap an anthem around, right? Then there's that pre-chorus, where they bring back "churchy" Priest, and the lead break where we get a rare bit of Van Halen-esque tapping. By the way, as my buddy (Coney Hatch guitarist) Sean Kelly once pointed out, Priest pour their heart and soul into their pre-choruses. Go check. It's almost funny.

1 "Delivering the Goods"

Well, here we are, my pick for greatest Judas Priest song of the '70s — and all time, actually — "Delivering the Goods." It's a crunchy, threatening, snarling rocker on *Hell Bent for Leather* — no fancy high stuff, everything manly and hairy. Who starts their album with an ambling bluesy jam like that? Only a band operating at their rarified peak. Soon we're into a malevolent groove, followed by a chorus that drops back to half-time. There's a modulation, and then — surprise! — a whole extra insanely infectious headbanger of a Priest song idea, albeit brief, before we're back to the band at their swaggering best. I've always said that the picture of Halford on the back of this album, bearded and looking hammered, is hands down my favorite shot of the guy. Well, this song sounds like that picture.

JUDAS PRIEST 1970s SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

45s

COLUMBIA

- 11000 The Green Manalishi (With the Two-Pronged Crown)/ Rock Forever, 1979, $40.00
- 11135 Diamonds and Rust/Diamonds and Rust [Promo], 1979, $20.00
- 11135 Diamonds and Rust/Diamonds and Rust, 1979, $40.00

Albums

GULL

- GU6- 403 Rocka Rolla, 1975, $—

—Release canceled

JANUS

- JXS 7019 Sad Wings of Destiny, 1976, $75.00
- JXS 7019 Sad Wings of Destiny [Disc Jockey Promo], 1976, $100.00

—Promo version, with "Specially faded for easier programming" sticker on cover

COLUMBIA

- PC 34787 Sin After Sin, 1977, $75.00

—Originals have no bar code on back cover

- JC 35296 Stained Class, 1978, $40.00
- JC 35706 Hell Bent for Leather, 1979 [Promo], $60.00
- JC 35706 Hell Bent for Leather, 1979, $40.00
- JC 36179 Unleashed in the East (Live in Japan), 1979, $60.00

VISA

- IMP 7001 Rocka Rolla, 1979, $50.00

—First U.S. issue of unreleased Gull LP; front cover still has a bottle-cap motif

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JOHN LENNON'S ONETIME GIRLFRIEND **MAY PANG** SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON WHAT HAS BECOME KNOWN AS 'THE LOST WEEKEND.' **BY RUSH EVANS**

LENNON LOST AND FOUND

"Paul and Linda were always visiting us when they were in New York," says May Pang. "They just showed up, all the time. All of a sudden, the doorbell would ring, and I'd go, 'Who could that be?' They'd just show up. 'Oh, it's Paul and Linda downstairs! Send them up!'"

It only took one short sentence for Pang to blow up two slices of conventional Beatle wisdom about John Lennon in the 1970s. Many Beatles fans have always been under the impression that Lennon and Paul McCartney were estranged from each other in the '70s apart from three or four friendly encounters. But Pang witnessed the continuing friendship after an acrimonious breakup of the two most celebrated songwriters and rock stars in history. McCartney and Lennon in their thirties were mates, just as they had been in their teens.

The other thing in that short sentence that a lot of Beatlemaniacs had gotten wrong was that the so-called "lost weekend" of Lennon's life was spent in Los Angeles. Yes, L.A. was an important part of that year-and-a-half-long "weekend," but most of that time was spent in Lennon's beloved New York City.

May Pang was there. The lost weekend began with Pang and ended with Pang. Indeed, along with her first boyfriend, Lennon, she *was* the lost weekend.

May Pang (above) at a recent gallery exhibition of her photography, which documents much of her time with The Beatles' John Lennon. Pang also celebrates the release of *The Lost Weekend: A Love Story* documentary on Blu-ray (right).

SCOTT SEGELBAUM

May Pang captured the happiness of John Lennon and his son Julian spending time together.

MAY PANG

The phrase as it has applied to Lennon all these years, by the way, came from the late Beatle himself, referring in a *Playboy* magazine interview to those 18 months as his "lost weekend," a reference to the 1945 movie starring Ray Milland as an alcoholic in a downward spiral.

With her recent documentary film, *The Lost Weekend: A Love Story,* and her release of a stunning array of candid Lennon photographs, Pang aims to set the record straight on this significant period in Lennon's life. And spoiler, Lennon was not "lost" during that year and a half, and neither was he in a constant state of inebriation with little productivity. It was a musically prolific time for the former Beatle, and to top it all off, he was in love. With May Pang.

Native New Yorker Pang at age 19 in 1970 landed a clerical job at ABKCO, Allen Klein's management company. He was the guy who just happened to manage Ringo Starr, George Harrison and Lennon at the time, all of whom had recently become ex-Beatles. Her frequent work with Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono, soon led to exclusive employment within their music business. She became part of their art and even appeared with them on *The Dick Cavett Show,* not that you could tell, because she was under a black sheet in a demonstration of their avant-garde art projects. She also coordinated one of their art shows and worked on several of their films.

And then one day, Ono told Pang that she and her husband were not getting along. The mythical version we've heard was that Ono sent both Pang and Lennon to Los Angeles to be together. What was actually said was that Ono wanted Pang to be a sort of companion/assistant to Lennon as the married couple separated. It was weird and awkward, but it wasn't a foregone conclusion that Pang would be Lennon's girlfriend, at least not for her, as her initial answer to Ono was, "No." But as Pang tells us in the film, "John, in the end, pursued me." This evolved over the weeks in which they were spending so much time together in and out of the studio while working on the *Mind Games* album. "Before I knew it, John Lennon

charmed the pants off me."

And so it began. Pang had a boyfriend, who just happened to be the husband of her boss and arguably the most famous musician on the planet. The morning after their first night together, Lennon busted out his guitar and began singing the song he'd just written for her, "Surprise, Surprise (Sweet Bird of Paradox)."

The documentary film proceeds to undo other myths about Lennon's life between 1973 and the last year of his life, 1980. The movie illuminates the story with Pang's own voice as the narration and vivid imagery, much of which is from her own candid photos taken by a young woman who was simply documenting her life at the time. "I was just taking photos of the moment, you know," Pang says. "You sort of say, 'Oh, that's a good shot.' And that's it! All these years, it had been in my storage underneath the bed. I'm still sleeping on the original bed, believe it or not, that John and I had. We had a captain's bed. So, there's the storage thing, here it is, and I just leave it there. It finally made its way up, and Scott, my business partner in all this, said, 'You've gotta do something. People should see these.' He was chasing me for six years to do this, and I said, 'No, I'm not ready.' It just happened to coincide with the movie, and that took three years. it all just came around at the same time, and it works. I'm just happy to see people, when they look at it, they get emotional. That to me was amazing. That they get emotional because they see the John that you could see through my eyes."

I had initially met Pang on her photo gallery tour in Austin, Texas, and she was friendly and enthusiastic to show me and others the framed photos on the wall and to tell the stories behind them. All of the photos capture regular guy in his thirties John Lennon simply living his life without the benefit of a Beatle haircut or a Sgt. Pepper uniform. There was one photo, however, that Pang showed me and a few others off her phone, a picture of a line drawing that Lennon had made after they had seen a UFO over New York together (the story and the line drawing appear in the film).

Pang was in Florida as we spoke on the phone in January 2024, and she had just left a city that had been an emotional stop on her photo tour for reasons that very much involved Lennon. She then told me the most extraordinary what-could-have-been Beatles story I've ever heard.

May Pang took many candid photos of John Lennon, like this one.

"I was in New Orleans," says Pang. "It was really an amazing moment to me, because it's 49 years ago I was supposed to be doing this trip with John, to the month. Because Paul and Linda came over and said, 'We're thinking of doing our next album. We're gonna be down in New Orleans.' John said, 'Oh really? That sounds good!' After they left, a day or so later, he showed me his guitar and said, 'Hey May, I gotta ask you something. What do you think if I wrote with Paul again?' This is after they dissolved The Beatles officially. I said, 'If you wanna write with him, I think it would be great.'

MAY PANG

He said, 'Why?' I said, 'Solo, you guys are good. But when the two of you put your heads together, that's another story. That takes it to another level.' And he just sort of went, 'OK.' Then a day or two later, he said, 'We should go down to New Orleans.' Paul and Linda had no idea we were thinking about doing that. Obviously, it didn't happen. I knew that if we had gotten down there, they probably would have written, and John would probably have been on the record. John would have been there for it."

A decade later, half of which was after Lennon's death, Pang was able to tell the McCartneys the story. "Ten years later, I told it to Linda first, and she said, 'You should tell Paul.' I said, 'No, you should tell him yourself,' and she said, 'You should tell him.' Then she brought me over to Paul, and she says, 'She's got something to tell you.' I told Paul we were thinking of visiting him, and he goes, 'Oh, sure sure sure.' I knew that he didn't really believe me. But then about a year or so later, Derek Taylor, who was of course the PR guy for The Beatles, he was selling his stuff, and Paul saw a postcard. It was from John to Derek, and there was John saying, 'Thinking of visiting the Macs in New Orleans.' And he told me that. They would never have known that, and I just happened to say it."

That is far from the only thing that Pang is setting the record straight on, and her very prominent existence in the Lennon story is reason enough to tell the story through film and photos. "I always took to the background so nobody really thought of me," says Pang. "I never put myself out there, you know, 'Hey, this is who I'm with.' It's only now that I talk about it, only because people have gotten my timing and things wrong, and after a while, you just sort of go, *OK, now I've gotta say something*. If you wrote an article and somebody else takes the credit for it, how would you feel? It's the same thing. People would say to me, 'Isn't it enough that you know that he loved you?' No! Why should I settle? Why should I settle when everybody else takes the credit? That's wrong."

Facts as simple as the amount of time that Lennon and Pang were a couple (18 months) and facts as big as Pang's creative contributions are being corrected. "People come up and they say, 'I thought it was only a weekend. I learned a lot from that movie,'" Pang says. "They didn't realize, for instance, that '#9 Dream' when John is whispering, they didn't realize that it's me. Or I had anything to do with anything. A lot of people didn't realize that I was in his life for a long time. You look back now at my relationship with John, whether it be personal or business, lasted a span of 10 years to the month."

Setting the record straight is not only cathartic for Pang personally, but it's important for Lennon's own legacy. "I just think about when John used to say to me, 'Don't worry, people will know about us,'" she says. "I would laugh and say 'sure,' because I don't think about it. *Now* I think about it, 50 years later! It's kind of wild. And it all came together at the same time. So maybe he had something to do with it. I don't know. It's good. And the fact that when people come in and they look at the photos, and they come over, and they go, 'I didn't know anything about you, but these photos are amazing.' They see another side of John that they never thought they would see. They just see a whole different person."

Seeing the whole different person really is the point of Pang's story, so I had to ask her the question she's gotten every day for half a century, "What was John Lennon like?" but I asked it through the corrective lens: "What is about John that we've all gotten wrong about him all these years?" And in her answer, Pang had another great story for me.

"What people don't realize about John [is that] he was actually more shy than most people would think, you know? He loved to be with people, but he was introverted. He didn't take himself as a big superstar. He knew he was, you know, you just know it, but you don't take yourself that seriously. I remember we were sitting there, we were watching television, and an advert came on, and it said the legendary Eric Clapton. And he says, 'Boy, that's tough, because I couldn't live up to that.' I said, 'Live up to what?' And he said, 'Legendary.' And I'm looking at John going, 'You don't think you're a legend?' He goes, 'Oh no, not me. I'm not that.' He didn't take himself that serious. He had no idea, in one way. He knew he was famous in another way, if we were out there, he'd go, 'Yes, I know I am.' But he didn't take himself like that at home or say, 'I am John Lennon.' He'll say it when you need to, I guess, when we're out and about and people are at you."

More John Lennon insecurities came to light when I asked Pang about her role in reuniting a pre-teen Julian Lennon with his estranged father, a subject also addressed in the documentary.

"It was a no-brainer," says Pang of the father and child reunion. "He hadn't seen his son. And I said to him, 'You know, it's time.' He was pacing. He said, 'Oh, I wish Cynthia wasn't bringing him over.' They hadn't seen each other, so you know he's really now pacing and seeing someone you haven't seen in years that you were once married to, so you can imagine what he was like. I said, 'You have no say in this.' And he looked at me. I said, 'You haven't been there for him. How could you? She can bring him over, and I will be there to help you make the transition. It'll be fine.' That's the only way he sort of dealt with it. And then it was like getting over it, and we managed to get over that hump, and once it went over that hump, everything worked out. It was fine. Then things went a little more smoothly. Every time they talked, he didn't have that angst anymore. He was able to just call and say, 'Hey Cynthia, how's everything? Good, fine.' Because he couldn't do it before."

Pang still feels good about having made such things happen for Lennon. "I thought it was just important; they have a son together! It was more important to that than anything else. It worked. So when I was around, I was trying to mend fences that no one had seen. In the time that we were together, you think about all the people he met, all the people he got back together with and talked to. I just thought it was fun to do that, to make him realize, you have friends, don't turn your back on them. They're there. They're your support."

In that reunion, Pang had also found a new friend in Cynthia Lennon. "Cynthia and I stayed very close until she passed away. I went to see her about a year and a half before she died. I went over to her home in Spain, and it was good to see her. I was sad when she died. Somehow, I knew. There was a phone call, and I just knew."

In the documentary, we also get to see Pang and Julian Lennon together in modern times as the friends they've been all along. I asked her if her role in young Julian's life had felt like that of a stepparent in her mid-twenties at the time. "Not

He wrote to me, and he was like, 'Hey do you have any photos of me from back then?' And I'm going, 'OK, let me look.' So I was just pulling out photos, and I said, 'This is what I have.' It was like in two seconds, when he saw the one photo, he went, 'Oh, my God, this one, right here.'

— MAY PANG ON PROVIDING THE COVER PHOTO FOR JULIAN LENNON'S *JUDE* ALBUM IN 2022

at the beginning. I'm a girlfriend trying to make life work, for everybody's sake, and not thinking about the parental role. Just a friend, I'm just here to help. It was just moving very fast."

Those photos from under the captain's bed sure came in handy in 2022, when Julian Lennon reached out in his quest to find a cover image for his new album. "He wrote to me, and he was like, 'Hey do you have any photos of me from back then?' And I'm going 'OK, let me look.' So I was just pulling out photos, and I said, 'This is what I have.' It was like in two seconds, when he saw the one photo, he went, 'Oh, my God, this one, right here.'" That's how Pang came to be the cover photographer for Julian Lennon's *Jude* album, making it another Beatles-related release inspired by and informed by the lost weekend.

There was a lot of music from John Lennon during the lost weekend. It was, in fact, his most prolific post-Beatles period artistically and arguably, it was his best, with three complete albums (*Mind Games, Rock 'n' Roll, Walls and Bridges*) and production on a Lennonesque Harry Nilsson album called *Pussy Cats*. And then there was *A Toot and a Snore in '74*, a rather infamous bootleg jam album by famous friends on an L.A. weekend that included Lennon, Pang, Nilsson, Paul and Linda McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Bobby Keys, Jesse Ed Davis, Ed Freeman and former Beatles roadie Mal Evans. Pang remembers it well, and she has the photographs to prove it.

"He and I also got a chance to jam with Paul," Pang says of the jam session. "The last jam they had, Mal Evans and I also participated in it, along with Stevie Wonder. It was just a jam, so if anybody says, 'Oh that record sucks,' remember, it was just a private time, a release after a session evening. John loved just clowning around and playing around."

The full-blown album releases represent only a portion of Lennon's prolific year and a half. He produced, played on or wrote a number of individual songs for famous friends. "We did one with Mick [Jagger, 'Too Many Cooks']. And then of course there was also David Bowie, we did ['Fame'], and there was also Ringo, 'Goodnight Vienna.' So all of this, and then we gave a song away to Johnny Winter ['Rock & Roll People'], and then we gave a song away to Keith Moon ['Move Over Ms. L']. I guess that was a lot of stuff done in that time period!"

As both a fanatical Johnny Winter and John Lennon fan, I had long loved Winter's version of Lennon's song but had never thought about the fact that it had to come into the Texas blues man's catalog directly from the former Beatle. Pang claims that it came about as the artists crossed paths in a New York recording studio. "We were in Record Plant East. This is where we did most of our recording. We were at the Record Plant in New York. Back in the Seventies, that was the studio to be in. that place was constantly moving. There was always somebody in there, so we saw everybody. Everybody from Aerosmith to Bruce Springsteen. The Raspberries. In and out. People were just there. You get to be friendly with everybody that's recording."

My ears perked up again at the mention of Springsteen, of whom I am also a major fan, and I have always been under the likely impression that Lennon and Springsteen had never met. What I did not know was how close they had come to meeting or that it might indeed have happened. Pang filled me in. "We were finishing up the *Rock 'n' Roll* album, and Jimmy Iovine moved over to working as an assistant on Bruce Springsteen's *Born to Run* album. So we were in the same studio. We were finishing up on one thing, and he was coming in on the other. So I don't know if they did get a chance to meet, or it had already ended, I don't remember. But I remember going into the studio, I remember meeting Bruce. And I gave him a lift to the hotel he was staying at. I remember Jimmy saying, 'You going to get your car? Can you give him a lift back?' I said sure. I gave him a lift back to the hotel. Didn't think anything of it. I remember saying that to Bruce a few years back. I said I gave you a lift back to your hotel, and he was looking at me like, 'Yeah, OK.' I told him, you were staying at this hotel. And he looked at me, 'Oh yeah, I was!'"

Pang's memories of working with Bowie on "Fame" revealed another interesting nugget about Lennon. "David was always shy, and I said this to John. He goes, 'What do you mean?' I said, 'You're bigger than life to him, and I think he's a little intimidated by you.' John never thought of it like that. But I could see it." It was at that time that Pang first met

John Lennon at the Calico Ghost Town in California, in 1973. "John saw this Tryke," May Pang explains. "He kept going back to looking at it. I finally said, 'Go and stand next to it.' I took one shot and didn't know if it was good or not."

Bowie producer Tony Visconti, but it was meeting him again a decade later that led to an 11-year marriage that produced both of her children (Visconti had been previously married to Apple Records recording artist Mary Hopkin, with whom he also had two children). I had to ask if her kids were mindful of the huge rock and roll history represented by both of their parents. "They're in that millennial age where it doesn't faze them. I know my daughter was a little into Bowie because she was a glam-rock girl."

Knowing that Pang's journey into that music history began with the controversial Allen Klein, I definitely wanted to ask for her thoughts on the man who has been saddled with much derision over the years, including the blame for the destruction of The Beatles. I had recently met a Beatles expert who'd made a positive case for Klein's role in The Beatles story, and I wondered if Pang could illuminate further. And yet again, she was able to dismantle the conventional Beatle wisdom.

"John actually liked Allen," Pang says. "He did do some stuff, I'm not saying he was 100 percent, but he did do something that helped a lot of acts later on. For instance, when they were negotiating a new deal for The Beatles and the record company, there was a clause in there, apparently, I may get this wrong, but I think it's in there, record companies would take 10 percent for breakage. He said, 'Breakage?' He took a record out, and he threw it on the floor, and he said, 'That's breakage?' And that clause came out, because there was no longer that heavy 78rpm type of thing that could have breakage, but the 45 didn't have that. The vinyl was different. So that came off not only for The Beatles, but also for other acts later on. And back then when they signed the deal, they also got a great bonus for signing the deal. And back then, a million dollars meant a million dollars. I wouldn't call a million dollars now worth much comparative to then. So he got them some good stuff back then, no matter what."

There was also a personal connection with Klein half a decade after The Beatles breakup.

"We hung out with him! At one point, Allen loaned us his home in the Hamptons the first time we went out there. He went, 'There, you can have the house for the weekend.' We went out there. It was a lot of fun, just me and John at his home."

Another controversial Beatles-related topic developed not too many months before our phone conversation, so I wondered how Pang felt about the release of the new Beatles song "Now and Then." Beatle fans have been debating: Would Lennon and Harrison approve? Pang's insight gives us a pretty good idea. "John always had a habit of taking songs, not finished, they're in a cassette. He'd like to record some stuff, whether it be a lick on the guitar or a verse of what he's thinking about, and he'd just put it down, and he had all these cassettes, and when he was ready, he'd gather them all up and put it together as it were. But you know what? He's not here. So I guess in the sense that, it's there, what are we gonna do with it? I think it was a good thing to let them do one last song together."

Lennon loved his wife Yoko Ono, and after they became parents to Sean Lennon in 1975, he was determined to be a more present father this time around. So in the end, countercultural hippie rock star icon John Lennon became the model of domesticity, a traditional family man.

But he also loved his girlfriend May Pang, who helped him find his creative musical path as a former Beatle to great effect and who even more powerfully reunited him in a friendly way with his first wife and in a parental way with his first son. The story of John Lennon and May Pang is anything but a lost weekend and is instead a beautiful love story that coincided with a lot of great music. Think about that the next time you listen to "#9 Dream" and hear Pang's voice whisper the name, "John."

MAY PANG

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The Royal Guardsmen

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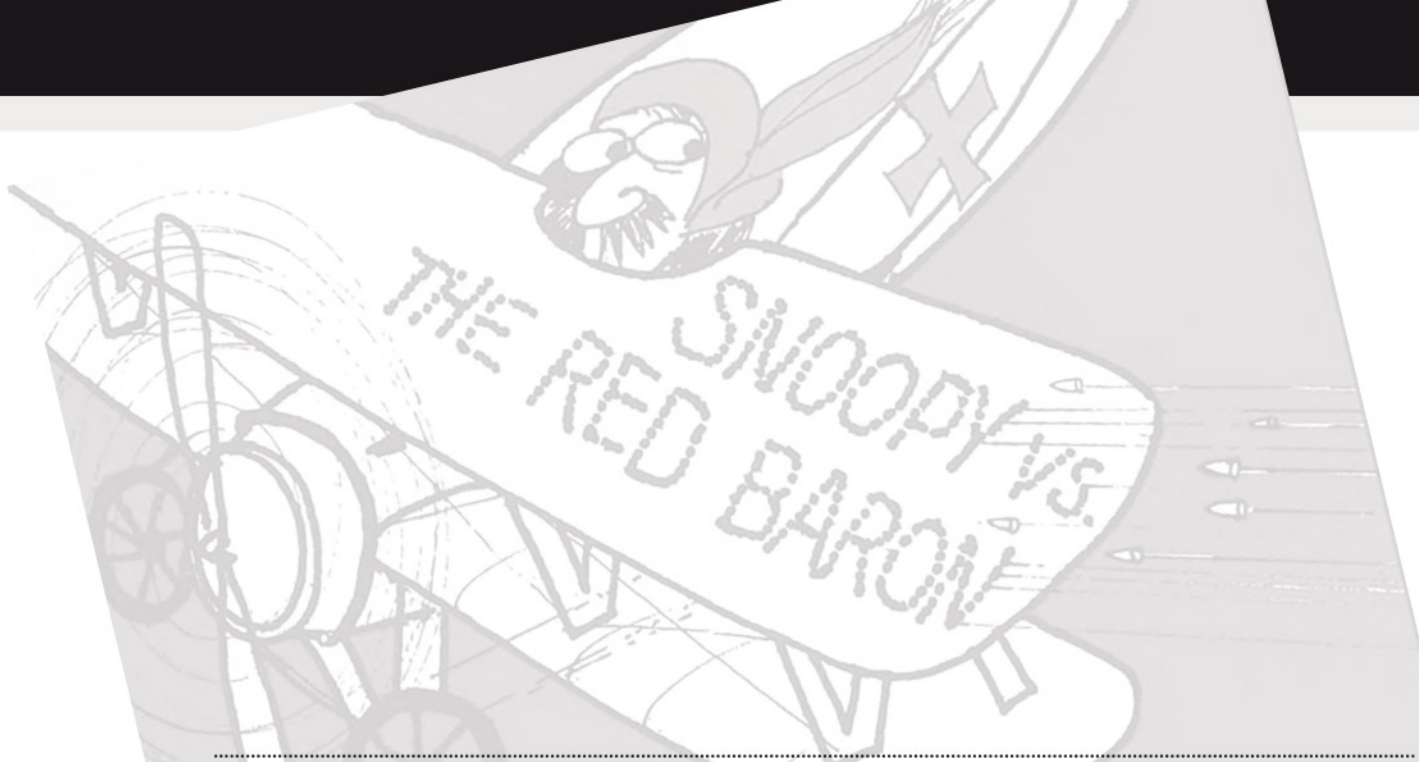

In an interview with **CHRIS NUNLEY** of The Royal Guardsmen, many '60s experiences are unearthed, as the band's spirit continues on.

BY TOM PRESTOPNIK

At a concert on board the Flower Power Cruise in March 2022 — maybe it was during a set by Felix Cavaliere's Rascals — a gentleman was singing loudly next to me. The concerts were usually so loud that even I could sing along and nobody would hear me (which was a positive). At the end of the set I mentioned, in jest, that we were both good and should go out on the road together. Knowing that the ship was full of great singers from The Hollies, The Zombies, John Lodge, The Guess Who, The Association and more, he said that he was in a band as a singer with The Royal Guardsmen. But on board the cruise he was just a fan, as was I. I'm guessing that there were probably other known music people on board as fans. His name's Chris Nunley, and I followed up by getting his contact information. And since I knew he lived in Ocala, Florida, I would be able to visit him for a face-to-face interview.

Ocala was home to The Royal Guardsmen, where they formed in the mid-1960s. Originally known as The Posmen, the band changed their name to capitalize on the British Invasion and the popularity of British bands such as The Beatles. The Guardsmen charted nine singles on the U.S. music charts from 1966 to 1969, including the hit single "Snoopy vs. the Red Baron." The band, after some breakups and reforming, are still together and getting it done 55 years later.

GOLDMINE: *I guess Charles Schulz started it all by personalizing, humanizing, the Red Baron. Understandably, he was a bad guy assigned to kill American and British airmen. Did you get any backlash about making the Red Baron almost a "likeable" bad guy? Album liner notes call the "Evil Red Baron a Gentle Evil." In our current divided country would a song like "Snoopy vs. the Red Baron" be popular today?*

CHRIS NUNLEY: From his point of view, he loved his country and he was doing what he thought he should do. *Peanuts* comic strip started in 1950, and Snoopy didn't get on his doghouse and "Curse you Red Baron" until about 1965. Someone comparable today would be Osama bin Laden, and we did a song about him [in 2006] that didn't get any airplay. The market has changed and there's not much rock and roll on the air anymore; now it's a lot of country, rap and hip-hop.

GM: *You mentioned that most of the original six members of The Royal Guardsmen are around and comprise the makeup of the current Royal Guardsmen. Who are around, and what are they doing? Start with you.*

CN: Well, we're all over 70 years old, and we're mostly retired. Each of us following our own pursuits. John Burdett, the drummer, put together a small studio last year and does recordings because he enjoys it. Barry Winslow, who was the lead singer on most of the records, lived out in Missouri for several years and got tired of the cold and moved back to Florida. He was doing gospel music and had a few albums out in contemporary Christian music.

GM: *I know that one of the Guardsmen passed on.*

CN: Yes, Tom Richards, our original lead guitarist, had a brain tumor and passed away in 1979. The rest of the players are Billy Taylor, the keyboard player, who occasionally plays mandolin in a local bluegrass band; and Bill Balough, the original bass player, who is still around, retired and just does what he feels like doing. And I'm playing with a country band on occasion. We have a new lead guitarist, Pat Waddell, and he plays in the country band, the Crossfire Band of Ocala, with me.

GM: *How often do the five of you get together?*

CN: [Recently] we had lunch and talked about old times. We did a 50th-anniversary reunion show in St. Petersburg

[Florida] in 2019. [Author] Bill DeYoung put it together, and we talked about putting together another show and that's a possibility.

GM: *Bill wrote a recent biography titled* Record Man, *which is the story of Phil Gernhard. Gernhard wrote and produced for you. How did you get connected with him? I know he was an interesting character, to say the least. Tell me a little bit about your relationship with him.*
CN: Bill mentioned us several times in his book. It was close to the facts. He does a lot of research for his books. Many times we'll have an interview and later read it and realize that the interviewer just made up stuff. Phil was an independent producer; his first production was "Stay" with Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs. I believe he was about 16 years old when he did that first production. He was going to law school when he approached us with the "Snoopy" project. If "Snoopy" hadn't taken off he probably would have stayed in law school. "Snoopy" went to No. 2 in a lot of markets and No.1 in a lot of other markets. Since he was an independent producer, he could take his music and shop demo tapes to any record label.

GM: *Was Gernhard in the studio with you when you were recording?*
CN: Yes, he was there. He was a fun guy to be around; he kept most of the money.

GM: *I understand that you were in Tampa and before a show Gernhard came to you with the "Snoopy" lyrics. Did he write them out, or did [songwriter] Dick Holler write them?*
CN: I don't have that information. We were setting up, and this guy comes in one of the side doors of the venue with a legal yellow pad. He said he and a friend had written some lyrics for a song about "Snoopy" from the funny papers, and were shopping it around to some of the local groups in the Tampa area. We took a look at it and it was "Snoopy this and Snoopy that," and we thought we were serious musicians, and weren't too sure about a novelty song. We were a cover band and did The Byrds, Rolling Stones, Beatles, Animals, etc. He gave us the lyr-

The Royal Guardsmen in 1966. (L-R) Tom Richards (guitar), Barry Winslow (vocals/guitar), John Burdett (drums), Chris Nunley (vocals), Bill Balough (bass) and Billy Taylor (organ).

GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS

ics and asked if we would take them back to Ocala and work up some music for the lyrics. Phil was coming to Ocala on the weekend, and it was Thursday and we decided that we'd better put something together. We showed Barry the basic chord structure, and kept it simple with a military feel on the drums. We'll make it kind of hokey and gimmicky and if he doesn't like it, he'll just leave us alone.

GM: *Where did the original music come from?*
CN: A few years prior, Dick Holler had written a tune about the Red Baron of Germany, sort of in the vein of Johnny Horton's "Battle of New Orleans" or "Sink the Bismark." He couldn't find any interest in the record, so he shelved it and when Schulz put Snoopy on top of his dog house and cursed the Red Baron, Holler reworked the lyrics, kept the melody, and the rest is history.

GM: *So you used the Holler melody and put it together with your band and then Gernhard came to Ocala on the weekend for a listen?*
CN: Yeah, Gernhard came up and we played it for him. He bent down and put his ear right next to the speakers and asked us to play it again. He said that he loved it and wanted us to go to Tampa the next week to a studio and record it, and then he'd shop it around. I don't know what record labels passed on it, but Laurie wanted it and they got it.

GM: *So the record put together in Ocala was pretty much what you ended up recording?*
CN: Laurie asked us to make a few small changes. Phil said that we need something to catch the ear of the listener. I was going to the University of Florida at the time and was taking German. The Red Baron was a typical German and always shouting, so I started with "Achtung"…. attention. Then I went into, "We will now sing together, the story of the history of a pig-headed dog, and the beloved Red Baron."

GM: *And you were the one shouting the cadence on the record*
CN: Yeah, I wrote it and should have gotten partial writing credit on the record. That's where all the money is: writers, labels, producers. The band got 2.7 cents per record sold, and that 2.7 cents was divided up into six band members.

GM: *In your heyday, you were on all the big-time TV shows;* Mike Douglas, Joey Bishop, Shindig, Hullabaloo, *etc. Do you have any funny or interesting stories about any of these shows or personalities?*
CN: We were never on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. We were in contract to be on the show and all of a sudden, out of nowhere The Monkees appeared. "Snoopy" was climbing and was at No. 2 and *The Monkees* TV show came out with "I'm a Believer," which shot to No. 1 and kept us out of the top position. We were No. 2 for four weeks.

GM: *Did you ever confront Micky Dolenz or any of The Monkees about that?*
CN: We did a show in Milwaukee in 1969,

"We were never on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. We were in contract to be on the show and all of a sudden, out of nowhere The Monkees appeared. "Snoopy" was climbing and was at № 2 and *The Monkees* TV show came out with "I'm a Believer," which shot to № 1 and kept us out of the top position. We were № 2 for four weeks."

— CHRIS NUNLEY

and The Monkees were part of that show. After the show we went back to the hotel, and in the lobby Micky Dolenz was playing piano, and not doing a very good job, but I couldn't play at all, so I couldn't say anything. I didn't confront him and have never had the chance to meet him face to face.

GM: *You opened shows for the likes of Jefferson Airplane, Association, Tommy James and the Shondells, Sam the Sham and the Pharaohs, The Beach Boys and Monti Rock III as Disco-Tex and the Sex-O-Lettes when you were on tour. Tell me some interesting stories about the artists you opened for back in the '60s.*
CN: We were going on a month long bus tour and in New York City, we got on this beautiful shiny new bus and had a lot of photos taken. Then the bus drove us to a garage, and we transferred to a beat-up, old, used Greyhound bus that we used for the tour. The new bus was just for the photo op.

GM: *Bill DeYoung said that you were "the first Florida band — the first to have a rock and roll hit." Is this an accurate statement? Were there others before you?*
CN: There were some minor hits, such as the Nightcrawlers had "The Little Black Egg." They were from Daytona Beach and it reached No. 85 in 1967. But we were the first to have a million seller from Florida.

GM: *Charles Schulz sued you for using Snoopy without permission. He settled out of court and you gave all your profits to his organization. Did you or the songwriters, Phil Gernhard and Dick Holler, make any money on that song?*
CN: When King Features Syndicate heard about our record they said, "We gotta get a taste of that." Laurie Records settled with King Features, and the problem with Snoopy went away.

GM: *In Canada they had "Squeaky vs. the Black Knight."*
CN: Laurie was fearful of being sued, so we rerecorded it with a few different words. Basically, it's the same track. Nobody in Canada or the USA knew of Squeaky or the Black Knight, but it was just something that somebody came up with. It was a dead-end thing. It was an archival record, and if you are big into the oeuvre of The Royal Guardsmen, you have to have that copy. It's available on YouTube.

GM: *Where were you when you first heard "Snoopy" being played on the radio? Your first hit on regional charts was "Baby Let's Wait." Do you remember hearing it being played on local Florida radio stations?*
CN: We were driving home from a teen dance thing somewhere in Tampa, and we had the radio on in the car and we heard the hook "Achtung" and we all yelled, "That's our record, turn it up." It went nationwide virtually overnight. Cousin Brucie was playing it.

GM: *Tell me about "Baby Let's Wait." That was released before "Snoopy." Was that a regional hit in Florida?*
CN: It did OK locally, then after "Snoopy" it was rereleased and went to No. 35 nationally in 1969.

GM: *What about "Snoopy vs. Osama?" It had a good sound and clever lyrics like the original. We were in different times then, and that might have prevented it from becoming a hit. How many of the original Guardsmen were on that "Osama" record? Who sang lead on that one?*
CN: That was written by John our drummer and Barry. Barry sang lead. We went to a studio in Gainesville. We made a few discs, but the market has changed, and you can't go to the radio stations anymore to shop it around.

GM: *What are your current plans? Are you touring? Are you available for concerts? How can somebody reach you?*
CN: We've got no current plans. We all got together for lunch and discussed concert plans. Bill DeYoung saw our photo on Facebook and contacted us and talked about doing another show sometime. We're five of the original six. We have a new guitarist who plays the parts that he needs to. We play mostly Florida, but a few years ago we played Las Vegas and Pasadena. You can contact me through my email address: charpo2006@embarqmail.com

GM: *Thanks for your time and we hope to see you on a Flower Power Cruise some time in the near future.*

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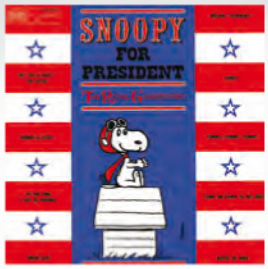

ALBUMS

LAURIE
- LLP 2038 Snoopy vs. the Red Baron (Mono), 1967
- SLP 2038 Snoopy vs. the Red Baron (Stereo), 1967
- LLP 2039 Return of the Red Baron (Mono), 1967
- SLP 2039 Return of the Red Baron (Stereo), 1967
- LLP 2042 Snoopy and His Friends (Mono), 1967
- SLLP 2042 Snoopy and His Friends (Stereo), 1967
- SLP 2046 Snoopy for President, 1968

MISTLETOE
- MLP-1238 Merry Snoopy's Christmas, 1978

HOLIDAY
- HDY-1913 Merry Snoopy's Christmas, 1980

ONE WAY
- S21-18147 Anthology, 1995 (available only on CD)
- Best of the Royal Guardsmen, 1998 (available only on CD)
- Snoopy vs. the Red Baron / Snoopy and His Friends, 2001 (Dual CD release)
- Return of the Red Baron / Snoopy for President, 2001 (Dual CD release)

SINGLES

LAURIE
- LR 3366 Snoopy vs. The Red Baron / I Needed You (Non-album track), 1966
- LR 3379 The Return of the Red Baron / Sweetmeats Slide, 1967
- LR 3391 Airplane Song (My Airplane) / Om, 1967
- LR 3397 Any Wednesday / So Right (To Be in Love), 1967
- LR 3416 Snoopy's Christmas / It Kinda Looks Like Christmas, 1967
- LR 3428 I Say Love / I'm Not Gonna Stay, 1968
- LR 3451 Snoopy For President / Down Behind The Lines, 1968
- LR 3461 Baby Let's Wait / Biplane 'Evermore,' 1968
- LR 3494 Magic Window / Mother, Where's Your Daughter, 1969

INDEPENDENT
- Snoopy vs. Osama, 2006 (CD release)

RARITIES ON COMPACT DISC (CD)

AC/DC - B'Ginnings - Schaumburg IL 9/14/78 - excellent FM broadcast
AC/DC - Complete Amsterdam - Netherlands 11/12/79 - excellent soundboard
AC/DC - On The Beeb - BBC performances 1976-79 - excellent FM broadcasts
Aerosmith - Rag Dolls - Hampton, VA 11/16/87 - excellent FM broadcast
Aerosmith - Texxas Jam '78 - Dallas 7/4/78 - excellent soundboard
Aerosmith - Train Kept A Rolling - Donington, England 8/18/90 - excellent FM broadcast
Alice In Chains - Greatfukinshow - Seattle WA 12/20/92 - excellent soundboard
Alice In Chains - Heroin - Publisher demos 1989 plus live tracks
Allman Brothers - The Scene (2CD) - Milwaukee WI 9/4/70 - excellent audience recording
Allman Brothers - Songs From The Road - Homewood NJ 8/16/94 - excellent soundboard
The Animals - BBC Files - London 1965-68 plus Stockholm 1/18/68 - excellent FM broadcasts
The Animals - Live In The Sixties (2CD) - radio and TV broadcasts 1966-67
Carmine Appice & Friends - The Advent Of Zeus (2CD) - Tokyo 3/4/82 - excellent soundboard
BTO - Blue Collar - Halifax, Nova Scotia 9/24/84 - excellent FM broadcast
Badfinger - Lost Treasure - Head First unreleased 1975 LP plus NYC 1971 - excellent soundboards
The Band - Royal Albert Hall Rags - London 6/2/71 - very good audience recording
The Bangles - Patti's Favourite - Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh, PA 12/13/86 - excellent soundboard
Beach Boys - Heroes And Vibrations - outtakes from Heroes and Villains and Good Vibrations
Beach Boys - Unsurpassed Masters Vol. 7 (1964) (4CD) - the alternate Beach Boys Today album, Vol. 1
Beatles - Abbey Road Recording Sessions (5CD) - excellent studio outtakes January 1969 to August 1969
Beatles - All Together Now - portable tape recorder sessions from the Beatles' chauffeur 1963-64 - very good quality recordings
Beatles - Fanthology (2CD) - rarities not on Anthology - 30 studio tracks and 35 live tracks
Beatles - Rockin' Movie Stars Vols. 1-8 (8CD) - studio outtakes - excellent studio recordings - all eight CD's for $100.00
Beatles - SPLHCB . . . Naked - basic tracks, remixes and bonus tracks
Budgie - Ricco's - Belleville IL 12/5/76 - excellent audience recording 2023 remastered
Jimmy Buffett - Big Apple Margaritas - Central Park NYC 8/2/77 - excellent FM broadcast
Jimmy Buffet - Cocktail Sunset - San Francisco 1973 plus NYC 1994 - excellent soundboards
Jimmy Buffet - The Gorge Live! (2CD) - George WA 9/29/96 - excellent soundboard
John Cipollina - Zero - Fillmore West 3/18/87 - excellent soundboard
Eric Clapton - 461 Ocean Boulevard Sessions - unreleased and alternative versions
The Clash - Combat Out Rocks - Combat Rock outtakes - very good studio recordings
Deep Purple - Pictures Of Bielefeld (2CD) - Germany 6/13/94 - excellent soundboard
Deep Purple - Purple Blood Runs Deep (2CD) - Hamburg, Germany 2/17/91 complete - excellent soundboard
Doors - Live In Stockholm (2CD) - Sweden 9/20/68 - both shows - excellent soundboards
Doors - The Miami Incident - Dinner Key Auditorium, Miami, FL 3/1/69 - very good audience recording
Bob Dylan - Genuine Basement Tapes, Volumes 1 - 5 (5CD) - Saugerties, NY 1967 - studio outtakes - may be ordered separately
Eagles - Giants Stadium Complete (3CD) - East Rutherford, NJ 8/24/94 - excellent soundboard
Eagles - Hell Freezes Over Rehearsals (2CD) - MTV Studios 4/26/94 - excellent soundboard
Grateful Dead - Dead de Luxe - Luxembourg 5/16/72 - excellent FM broadcast
Greta Van Fleet - Lincoln Hall - Chicago 11/30/17 - excellent soundboard
Guns n' Roses - Las Vegas 2016 (2CD) - Reunion Tour First Night 4/8/16 - excellent soundboard
Guns n' Roses - LA Forum 2017 (3CD) - Inglewood, CA 11/29/17 - excellent FM broadcast
Guns n' Roses - Soldier Field 2016 (2CD) - Chicago 7/1/16 - excellent soundboard
Jimi Hendrix Experience - Electric Ladyland Outtakes - demos, outtakes & rough mixes 1968-69
Jimi Hendrix - Gypsy Sun & Rainbows (3CD) - Jimi's house in Shokan, NY summer 1969 - excellent soundboards
KISS - Do You Love Us Cleveland? - Cleveland, OH 9/3/76 - excellent soundboard
KISS - Fairgrounds Pavillion - Tulsa OK 6/13/75 - excellent soundboard
Led Zeppelin - Final Touch - Berlin 1980 (last show of the tour) - excellent soundboard
Led Zeppelin - Return To Paris Theatre - London 4/1/71 - excellent soundboard of complete show
Led Zeppelin - Second City Showdown (3CD) - Chicago Auditorium 7/6/73 - excellent soundboard
Paul McCartney - The Fabulous One (2CD) - Chicago 4/10/02 - excellent audience recording
Paul McCartney - Live On KCRW - Hollywood, CA 9/5/07 - excellent FM broadcast
Paul McCartney - The Making Of James Paul McCartney - outtakes from the TV show - excellent studio recordings
Motley Crue - American Rock Festival - Timber Ridge, MI 5/27/84 - excellent audience recording
Mötley Crüe - Here I Cum . . . Tacoma - Tacoma WA 10/15/87 - excellent soundboard
Ted Nugent - Nugent Nuggets - Los Angeles Sports Arena 5/12/81 - excellent FM broadcast
Page & Plant - A Journey To The Past - Tacoma WA 5/25/95 - excellent soundboard
Tom Petty - The Travelling Heart - Oakland, CA 11/24/91 plus Reno, NV 11/23/91 - excellent soundboards
Pink Floyd - The Division Bell Trance Remix - nine studio tracks
Pink Floyd - In The Flesh (2CD) - Oakland CA 5/9/77 - excellent audience recording
Pink Floyd - Live In Montreaux (2CD) - Montreaux Jazz Festival 9/18-19/71 - excellent soundboard
Elvis Presley - For Elvis Fans Only - unreleased versions 1967-72
Elvis Presley - Hawaiian Oddities - Blue Hawaii outtakes
Pretenders - Guitars And Eyeliner - Riviera Theatre, Chicago 9/8/80 - excellent FM broadcast
Pretenders - Mystery Achievements - B-sides, demos & live rarities - excellent soundboards
Pretenders - Santa Monica 1981 - Civic Auditorium 9/4/81 - excellent FM broadcast
Queen - Classic Remixes - dance remixes
Rolling Stones - Sucking Don On Saturday Night Live - Don Kirshner's Rock Concert 7/73, 10/74, SNL 10/78 and rehearsals 10/78 - excellent soundboards
Rolling Stones - Too Much Blood On The Dancefloor - 12" dance mixes 1978-90
Rolling Stones - Toronto Soundboard 2003 (2CD) - Downsview Park 7/30/03 plus Palais Royale, Toronto 8/16/02 - excellent soundboards
Rush - Cool Under Fire - Largo, MD 9/27/84 - excellent soundboard
U2 - The Spice Boys (2CD) - Fleet Center, Boston MA 6/8/01 - very good audience recording
Wishbone Ash - No More Lonely Nights - Loreley, Germany 9/14/85 - excellent soundboard
Yardbirds - Fillmore 1968 - San Francisco 5/68 - very good audience recording
Yardbirds - Happenings - Stockholm 4/14/67 plus Paris 6/20/65 and Germany 3/67 - excellent soundboards
Yardbirds - Live (featuring Jimmy Page) - Anderson Theatre NYC 3/30/68 plus soundcheck and French TV 1967 - excellent soundboards
Yes - The Demos & The Tower - Yes Album demos plus Tower Records, LA 11/27/96 (FM broadcast)
Yes - G.O. 1984 - Edmonton 9/28/84 - excellent FM broadcast
Neil Young - Catalyst Tapes Volume One - Santa Cruz, CA 2/6/84 first set - excellent soundboard
Frank Zappa And The Mothers - Smoke On The Water - Montreaux, Switzerland 12/4/71 - excellent soundboard
Frank Zappa - That's My Girl - various live and studio rarities 1958-88 - very good to excellent quality
Frank Zappa & Captain Beefheart - An Evening With . . . 1975 radio broadcast with songs from 1963-75
Warren Zevon - The Electric Werewolf - Minneapolis 2/27/90 - excellent soundboard
Warren Zevon - Headless In Boston - The Metro 9/29/82 - excellent FM broadcast
Warren Zevon & Jackson Browne - The Offender Meets The Pretender - Holland 12/8/76 - excellent FM broadcast

RARITIES ON DVD

AC/DC - Monsters Of Rock - Donington, UK 8/18/84 - pro-shot
Eagles - Christchurch 1995 - New Zealand 11/26/95 complete show - pro-shot
Flying Burrito Brothers - Family Tree - FBB & related video clips from best available sources 1969-85
Rory Gallagher - Old Grey Whistle Test 1976 - Shepherd's Bush Empire, London, UK 3/2/76 - excellent TV broadcast
Rory Gallagher - Taste So Good! - Belgium 1969, Paris 1971, Madrid 1975 - TV broadcasts
Gamma - Alive For Action - Curtis Hixon Hall, Tampa FL 11/30/80 - pro-shot
Danny Gatton - TV Files - TV appearances 1989-94
David Gilmour - Pink Floyd Songs Only - Chicago 4/4/16 - excellent audience recording
David Gilmour - Radio City 2006 (2DVD) - NYC 4/5/06 - complete show - very good audience recording
Grand Funk Railroad - Live! - LA Forum 6/2/74 - pro-shot - complete show
Guess Who - Compilation - TV clips (many with timing strip) plus Life And Times Of Burton Cummings Canadian documentary
Bill Haley & The Comets - Collection - TV and film clips 1950's - 1970's
Heart - Capitol Centre - Largo MD 10/15/78 - pro-shot
Jimi Hendrix - Atlanta Pop Festival - Middle Georgia Raceway 7/4/70 - pro-shot
Jimi Hendrix - Classic Sixtyseven - pro-shot rarities from 1967
Iron Butterfly - Video Compilation - 1960's TV performances
Jefferson Starship - Rock Moscone - San Francisco 5/28/82 - pro-shot
Jethro Tull - Waiting For The Dark Ages - Dortmund, Germany 5/28/82 - pro-shot
Elton John - Live From The East - Budokan Hall, Tokyo, Japan 11/23/01 - pro-shot
KISS - Anaheim Ultimate Edition - Anaheim CA 8/20/76 - pro-shot
KISS - Cobo Hall 1977 - Rock And Roll Over tour - Detroit 1/29/77 - pro-shot
Ted Nugent - Wayne State University - WSU-TV Studio, Detroit 1971

ORDERING INFORMATION: These CD & DVD rarities cost $15.00 for singles, $25.00 for doubles (or DUAL layer DVD's), $35.00 for triples, $45.00 for quads, and $50.00 for five-disc sets. Orders over $100.00 receive free shipping to the US and Canada. Please provide us with your full name, address and phone number. We accept checks and money orders (made payable to "ALEX STRONG"), VISA, Mastercard, American Express & Discover. Our new processor requires the 3 digit security code (cvv) on the back of the card. Get our 59-page CD & 13-page DVD catalogs for $5.00 postpaid or FREE with any order. All items always available from this and previous ads.
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[MORRISON | FROM PAGE 15]

where there is a version of me singing it because I wrote that, too. Well, we had a whole album, but interestingly enough, Billy was glaringly absent. His was [on] the last song to be done on this record. I was sitting there looking at the other 11 songs, and this is basically an album of me and my close friends on there. There was no hustling to get these people to be on the record. Everyone on the record I text all the time, and it was glaringly obvious that my boss in Billy Idol, Billy Idol, was not on the record, and it seemed weird. So I texted him and asked if he would do one [song]. He said, "Of course." And I sent Steve [Stevens] the song. He made a few changes, which made the world of difference, and then I wrote the lyrics, sang it and sent it to Billy. He showed up and took about half an hour, and then he was gone. And he did it and, yeah, it was amazing. Another icon. I cannot imagine being in any other band. Billy Idol. I used to go and see him in Generation X. I'm the only person in Billy Idol's band that saw Generation X. So, to end up not only being in the band, but also realizing how wonderful and truly iconic he is, and down to earth, I just could not imagine being in any other band.

GM: *Finally, the song "Incite the Watch," which you got Corey Taylor and Steve Vai to collaborate; that's quite a combo there.*
BM: I got to tell you, that was actually two songs that I put together to make one. I had the dirty, heavy industrial loop section, which I sent to Corey, and God love him, he has got one of the greatest voices in rock. What you hear on that is what he sent back. There's no tuning, there's no effects, there's no nothing. It was absolutely perfect. But I also had this section of music which was the same tempo, and it was inspired by an English band called The Wildhearts. The Wildhearts are one of the greatest bands that never quite got there. They've released over 20 albums. And the main guy, Ginger, has this really unique songwriting thing where it's all power chords, but there are key changes and rhythmic changes. It's quite complex. And I had this section of music which was three key changes, rhythm changes and this whole mad riff. So, I stuck it on the end of the Corey bit, and it worked. And I thought, Well, I guess Steve would be really good over such a complex musical section. And that's how the two pieces of music ended up being one epic journey for six-and-a-half minutes. Corey got up many, many times with my other band called Royal Machines. And yeah, he's a wonderful man, too. I said, "Would you do a song?" He said, yes. It's the only song we have no lyrics for because I can't quite make out what he's singing, and he hasn't told me what the lyrics are. So basically, that's the one song on the album where I'm singing it in my head phonetically, because I'm not quite sure what he's singing. (laughs)

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Mike Tramp	Mand Af En Tid	2024 release		$15
UFO	Only You Can Rock Me Live In Louisville 1978			$16

[WAR | FROM PAGE 43]

knew the band from that time; he knew all the knick-knacks that it was going to take to make this such a robust package.

JG: It's like, suddenly, they got it, and they were a million percent behind it. Finally, they went, "Wow, this is really something different." But it took us a while to make them understand exactly what we were trying to do. They own tons of catalogs — they have Led Zeppelin, Fleetwood Mac, they have the Stones — but no one had ever done this before, and this is why [we] decided to do this thing as a making-of, to show people how we make these records, and that's the reality of how we got here.

JL: You can't get more WAR than this. It is intricate, organic and you can't get more authentic. This is real WAR in their element. It's like a real window not only into their music but into their souls as well; this is true-to-life documentation.

.....

Ask a lay person to name the highest selling album of all time, and they would more than likely not even attempt a guess. Even with an attempt, chances have it that they would be well off base. And even more of a challenge would be, "What was the highest selling album of the year in 1973?" Any individual who claims an above average knowledge of the annals of music may make many confident guesses, such as *The Dark Side of the Moon*, *Houses of the Holy* or *Let's Get it On*, from the seasoned and accomplished musical minds of Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin or Marvin Gaye, respectively, to which their answers would all fall to a failing grade.

Why is it so difficult to imagine that a lesser-known band, which rose from the asphalt of lower-income Los Angeles, who came from lesser-backgrounds, could surpass the accomplishments of these artists? Why must we assimilate musical accomplishments by the size of an artist's record label? The fact of the matter is, a group of musicians from the metropolitan lower class of Los Angeles, with a legendary producer by their side, created the biggest musical upset by garnering the top-selling album of the year in 1973. How did they do it? They spent 30 days in the ghetto and did what the good book says — *"Thou shalt work 29 days straight, and then rest in absolute gratitude, on the last."*

WAR 1970s ALBUMS/SINGLES DISCOGRAPHY

45s

ABC
- 12244 Magic Mountain/Home Dream, 1977, $10.00

BLUE NOTE
- 1009 L.A. Sunshine/Slowly We Walk Together, 1977, $10.00

MCA
- 40820 Galaxy (Part 1)/Galaxy (Part 2), 1977, $10.00
- 40883 Hey Senorita/Sweet Fighting Lady, 1978, $10.00
- 40995 Good, Good Feelin'/Baby Face (She Said Do Do Do Do), 1979, $10.00
- 41061 I'm the One Who Understands/Corns & Callouses, 1979, $10.00
- 41158 Don't Take It Away/The Music Band 2 (We Are the Music Band), 1979, $10.00

MGM
- 14118 Spill the Wine/Magic Mountain, 1970, $20.00
- 14196 They Can't Take Away Our Music/Home Cookin', 1970, $10.00

UNITED ARTISTS
- 50746 Lonely Feelin'/Sun Oh Sun, 1971, $20.00
- 50815 All Day Music/Get Down, 1971, $10.00
- 50867 Slippin' Into Darkness/Nappy Head, 1971, $10..00
- 50975 The World Is a Ghetto/Four Cornered Room, 1972, $10.00
- SP 92 Edited Versions from The World Is a Ghetto, 1972, $20.00
- SP 92 Where Was You At/City, Country, City//Beetles in the Bog/Four Cornered Room, 1972, $20.00
- SP 103 Radio Free War, 1974, $50.00 —Promo only on blue vinyl
- SP 184 Youngblood (Livin' in the Streets) (9:07)/Keep On Doin', 1978, $20.00
- XW 163 The Cisco Kid/Beetles in the Bog, 1973, $10.00
- XW 281 Gypsy Man/Deliver the Word, 1973, $10.00
- XW 350 Me and Baby Brother/In Your Eyes, 1973, $10.00
- XW 432 Ballero/Slippin' Into Darkness, 1974, $10.00
- XW 629 Why Can't We Be Friends?/In Mazatlin, 1975, $15.00
- XW 706 Low Rider/So, 1975, $15.00
- XW 834 Summer/All Day Music, 1976, $10.00
- XW 1213 Youngblood/(Instrumental), 1978, $10.00
- XW 1247 Sing a Happy Song/This Funky Music Makes You Feel Good, 1978, $105.00

ALBUMS

ABC
- D 988 Love Is All Around, 1977, $25.00 — As "War Featuring Eric Burdon"

BLUE NOTE
- BN-LA 690 Platinum Jazz, 1977, $30.00

BURNS MEDIA CONSULTANCY
- 43934 Platinum: Jazz A Story of War - A Radio Special, 1976, $200

MCA
- 3030 Galaxy, 1977, $40.00
- 3085 The Music Band, 1979, 15.00
- 3193 The Music Band 2, 1979, 15.00

MGM
- SE 4663 Eric Burdon Declares "War," 1970, $40.00
- SE 4710 The Black-Man's Burdon, 1970, $50.00
- SE 4710 The Black-Man's Burdon, 1970, $80.00 — Includes"Official War Bond"

UNITED ARTISTS
- UA-LA 128 Deliver the Word, 1973, $30.00
- UA-LA 193 War Live!, 1974, $40.00
- UA-LA 441 Why Can't We Be Friends?, 1975, $30.00
- UA-LA 648 Greatest Hits, 1976, $30.00
- UA-LA 904 Yougblood (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack), 1978, $25.00
- UAS 5508 War, 1971, $50.00
- UAS 5546 All Day Music, 1971, $50.00
- UAS 5652 The World Is a Ghetto, 1972, $50.00

Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

CONCERT POSTERS

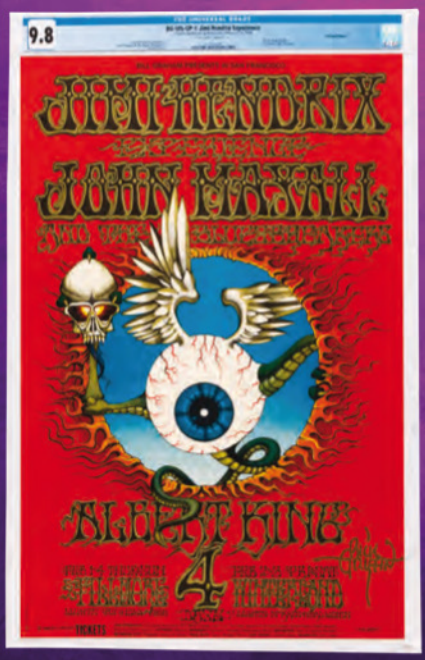
Always Accepting Quality Consignments

Buddy Holly & the Crickets "The Day the Music Died" 1959 Historic Concert Poster.

Sold for $447,000

The Beatles 1966 Shea Stadium NY Concert Poster, Newly Found Unrestored Condition.

Sold for $275,000



BG-105 Jimi Hendrix 1968 "Flying Eyeball" Concert Poster Signed by Rick Griffin, Graded 9.8.

Sold for $175,000

Pink Floyd 1977 Oakland, CA Concert Poster Signed by Randy Tuten, Graded 9.8 (AOR-4.47).

Sold for $8,125

INQUIRIES: 877-HERITAGE (437-4824)
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Music Memorabilia | Garry Shrum | 214-409-1585 | GarryS@HA.com

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Paul R. Minshull #16591. BP 15-25%; see HA.com 74884

MUSIC MEMORABILIA

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The Beatles *Yesterday and Today* Sealed Mono "First State" with "Butcher" Cover LP Vinyl Record (Capitol, T-2553) Slabbed and Graded 9.0.

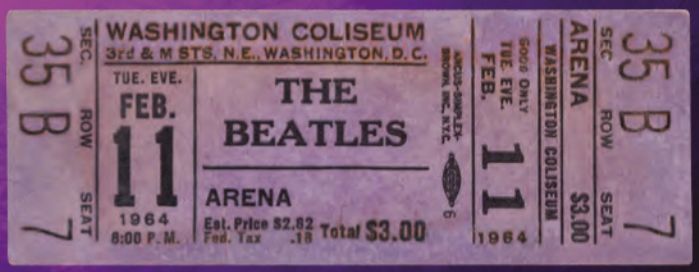
Sold for $112,500

The Beatles Large Signed Pan American Flight 101 Menu Plus (10) Photos From the Flight to America (February 7th, 1964).

Sold for $100,000

Meet the Beatles! Original Capitol Records Mega-Rare Moving Heads Store Display (1964).

Sold for $47,500



The Beatles Unused Concert Ticket for First U.S. Concert in Washington D.C. (1964)

Sold for $28,750

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Concert Posters | Pete Howard | 214-409-1756 | PeteH@HA.com

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